DEWDROP'S TRANSLATION OF THE HOMESTUCK CLASSPECT SYSTEM, FOR BOTH ARTICULATING SELF-REFLECTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL UTILITY

Q: tldr wtf is this

A list of personality "classes" from Homestuck, meant to help people identify friends and themselves. Knowing the comic is irrelevant, but I will keep that kind of chatter (along with my more personal anecdotes) in this style of text.

Q: sorry this is a psychoanalysis thing based on what again

Homestuck is a webcomic about a couple dozen teenagers finding themselves and what they believe in (and brutally murdering betty crocker). Among the misadventures, a large crux of the comic is a personality system - which seems to draw inspiration from a few sources, though Jung's personality system the heaviest. I know his work's contentious, and I don't know everything Andrew Hussie read (hell, maybe no Jung involved at all and they just found similar conclusions), but I can say this stuff seems to apply to reality. It covers alot of bases, and while it's not the be-all-end-all of psychology, it still covers enough to be useful - and what it does cover can be unsettlingly accurate, what with how many surface traits lead back to the same inner turmoils, justifications, and speeches. While I`ll keep the flavourful terms like "Derse" and "Prospit", and the medieval fantasy titles, I stand by this system being applicable to real people - you, and anyone you know.

Q: what if two classes seem to fit me? am i both? maybe the test is dumb and you shouldnt be taking a webcomic that seriously

I clear up confusions, and others in your circle will spot you better than skeptics can themselves; though, in the comic, the character Sollux is shown as being both Prospit and Derse, but it's unclear if this is due to his bipolar condition or "two of everything" theme. Beyond that, the system has demonstrated a remarkable capability to whittle people's phillosophies to inarguable cores, ascertain what secrets and complexes they're predisposed to hide from people, and predict their paths for development or downfall. I appreciate skepticism, but the fact that human psychology is a contentious field does not mean systems are impossible - while the classpect system is not truly absolute, and may be simplifying the truth, there is still truth. I do await anyone who truly has "changed" or exempted from the system - even through drug use, which would be neat. I am, however, very tired of what are clearly Princes trying to avoid their label through Princey arguments. I'll get to them.

Q: what's the point?

Whatever you want; we're whittling down and highlighting the impulses of what individual people consider artistically and spiritually resonant. I'd argue it's about empowering the voice of an individual's creative spirit, while making them more resiliant to hard times and trauma that may have influenced them. I am, however, predisposed to believe things like that, so your mileage may vary. I will make judgements based on the basic principles of "Be excellent to each other", "Treat people the way you want to be treated", and "Labels that point out bad habits should have us reconsider bad habits and not labels".

Q: so where'd all these descriptions come from if the comic didnt explain everything

My initial source:(https://homestuckexamination.tumblr.com/post/168160703234/homestuck-mythological-class-quiz). Ultimately I found it too mystical in certain places, and in others simply failing to acknowledge the real complexities of why certain classes are what they are. Homestuck and it's spin offs are obviously major sources too, but the absolute standard is the real people I've met. Young and old, rich or poor, fans or strangers, I've done my best to have a large sample size and corraborate with others.

Q: the comic says some are gender specific. are they?

I'm keeping the door open, but some seem to be AFAB and AMAB locked. Doesn't matter. Trans rights are human rights. If the only way to get a Princess is through a Prince becoming a transwomen, I say it's as valid (and cool) as a Pokemon that only evolves through trading. Thinking a new identity needs a new class is wishful thinking, when we can focus on redefining what our class means to ourselves. When we make facts shackles, we give ammunition to our enemies, and weaken our words to ourselves and those around us.

Q: you use semicolons too much

Probably; I type how I talk - impatient and improvised. If I don't, sounds too stilted; every sentence trips into another. Occupational hazard.

HELLO
(IT BEGINS)

Welcome to the Brochure. Here's what will be covered:

Aspects: The delicious contrasting flavours of "what the world is all about", 12 in total.

Class: The precise breed of obligations and self hatred that define us, in 16 archetypes, defined by 8 paired sets and 4 tiers of escalation in regards to intensity. Only 14 will be described initially, with the last 2 at the end of the document, due to the difficulty of identifying them from the others.

Hey, "tiers" don't mean "quality" here; everyone's got a purpose, no one asks for any of this. I'm just describing them in this order to show trace calmer impulses into all consuming ones, which I feel is an easier narrative to digest then shrinking things down. A class being wilder and more ambitious doesn't make it morally better or worse - more unsafe, definately, but that's something to live with. You stuff it down, and I'll have every way you fail and relapse down in *print*.

Defining classpects as a see-saw was an interesting model. I've seen a few. They're all wrong, mostly due to adding too much myth to the Master classes, and trying to build around them. I will make my case as best I can, but I also wanted to mention a friend of mine (who wanted to be anonymous, but still wanted credit) who came up with a better model. See, she figures low intensity classes are another kind of "extreme" as much as the high intensity ones, and divised her own model: basically, a globe. Cut it into quarters like an orange, and they'd represent active attunement, passive attunement, active adaptation, and passive adaptation, with the lowest and highest intensity at either end. It's a nice way of having true parity, not implying any kind of "true middle" (it doesn't exist), and pointing out that high extremes and low extremes have alot in common where a see saw would put everything else between them. She's clever. I like her.

Class "Sway": Prospit and Derse: fancy words for which people are emotionally open, and which people live in a permanent state of "just kidding haha unless?" with cries for help sprinkled in for flavour. All classes will feature a further examination of the Prospit and Derse varients, and how it colours their behavior into more specific idiosyncrasies.

Just mentally replace it with "Order" and "Chaos" respectively if you want, but I think it'd be pretentious now to invent new words when so much here is dependent on Homestuck proper. I'm here to build and extrapolate Hussie's work, not hijack it, and I'm perfectly proud of the effort I've exerted here anyways. I got too many people in my life telling me I should make this more "mine" - my signature's written all over this for anyone to notice, in every way I care about measuring.

Inversion: In which it is revealed 50% of your time has been wasted in regards to aspects and classes, but we gotta build up to it. Don't worry, Prospit and Derse are still static.

My only issue with the globe model is that it implies and even more inverted-inversion, where the see-saw (or rather, a properly organized see saw) better illustrates into how standard-inversion functions. I mean in the globe model, they're touching now, so I guess...blah, use whatever model you want, so long as we understand what we're talking about - and no, I have no arguments with the aspect wheel.

Let's get this ball rolling.

ASPECTS
(MOODS, VIBES, MEMES)

An "aspect" is the nickname given to a general group of values and concepts that the brain locks into, which heavily influences the classes we'll be discussing. While unique human experiences will vary the conclusions, specific language and political leanings, the *tone* is consistant; recognizing our own and others is valuable. While this obviously doesn't exclude anyone's ability to appreciate certain ideas or be influenced by others, we're here to discuss which beliefs are most personal - and, quite possibly, permanent.

...uh, hang on. Here's a diagram:

You can probably figure out which is which from context clues.

Remember, you're looking for what you resonate or "vibe" with here, with the opposite feeling kinda antagonistic - if you're indifferent, using both sides interchangably and without a favourite/fear, it's not your axis. Ultimately, aspects are what we care about beyond our immediate self interest, what we aspire to, and what we spiritually respond to...so yeah, irrational obsessions. It's what makes us human, ain't it?

TIME: Destruction, Determination, Willpower, Spite, Hunger, Death, Mechanisms, Material Reality, Inevitability, Endings, Conflict, Raw Function, Heat, Meat, Tempo,
SPACE: Creation, Choice, Creative Expression, Will of the Universe, Surrender, Art, Ambiance, Meditation, Candy, Detachment, Abstraction, Dreams, Cold, Acceptance

Resting at the most extreme points on the axis of “Is” and “Isn’t”, these two aspects and their dichotomy ripple into every other aspect besides the other axis aspects (which even then should be acknowledged for their neutrality). Space is a masturbatory belief *about* beliefs, where Time is a paradoxical belief *against* beliefs, both chasing contentment. A fixation on the material here-and-now and one’s capacity to influence the world defines the Timebound; to see it all as temporary provokes a near permanent existential unease. The pressure of mortality and missed opportunities compounds into a conviction of “what I gotta do”, where action itself is the only moral value; retribution and snap judgements are sanctified into a death spiral of consequence for the sake of consequence. This vapidity is occasionally embraced/encouraged wholesale, but it’s just as likely to be recognized for its absurdity, sparking a macabre fascination in how these obsessions have consumed individuals, civilizations, or life itself. If this hyper-fixation on the external is forced internal, Time veers into a unique “anti-art”; meat and machinery, sex and violence, profane and lurid, our truest function is only to die, burn it all down. This perspective is easily understood by Spacebound, but as the very thing they pull away from; it is a rejection of the material world that frees one from conviction and convention. Space’s contented withdrawal leads to a signature of gardens, minimalist living, and meditation - which basically either hits Buddhism directly, or by accident. In acceptance and surrender, true contentment, where death itself is deemed irrelevant - you can’t lose if you don’t care. Whether by embracing the rainbow tapestry of the human imagination, or the immortal spite of the human infestation, both aspects tend to conclude that our extinction is as deserved as it is inevitable: the question is whether or not to participate.

Neither of these are Good and Evil - but if you’ve read the “Hero with a Thousand Faces”, you’ve heard of someone who would make that distinction. The quote “Lecherous fever of the organic cell” speaks to the essence of the Time aspect, but it is meant with such hostility; as the book inspired George Lucas, the Light and Dark side of the Force only further culturally establish one correct answer. Look, every aspect has merit, and being Timebound isn’t just some curse you have to grow out of. Time is alot of petty bullshit - of getting worked up over small shit, of not letting go of shit, of being ruled by your emotions - but we are not some perfect cosmic beings beyond all of that, and we probably shouldn’t even frame it as “beyond” in the first place! Everyone is going to have to proccess their emotions on murder, selfishness, and legacy someday - it’s a part of you, even if we have to choose how much or little. There is no path through life that steps on no toes, that takes from no one, that ever truly “isn’t” some personal will we’re valuing over someone else’s. It’s important to be a little prideful sometimes, even if it’s the true Timebound who tend to feel prideful *about* being prideful.

Then again, I’ve got skin in the game on this one. Go Team Gevurah.

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HEART: Subjectivity, Soul, Reflection, Persona(lity), Passion, Identity, Charisma, Romance, Theatre, Character Narrative, Obsession, Relationship Dynamics,
MIND: Objectivity, Logic, Investigation, Clarity, Research, Balance, Allocation, Systems, Puzzles, Strategy, Prediction, Decisions, Outcomes, Chess, Guiding Laws

Regardless of whether there is any actual interplay between the literal right or left brain, the Heart and Mind aspects create an intuitive dichotomy between obtrusive emotion and elegant ascendence - and indeed, the emotions the Heart aspect fixates on are *always* obtrusive. Heart mythologizes the wildest, loudest, and hottest passions into a representation of someone's pure soul, where self-sabotage proves its genuine and contradiction proves complexity. Mind, meanwhile, wants none of this: emotions are to be outmanuevered, appeased, waited out, or flat out ignored, all in the name of pursuing a fair (though not always *happy*) system of justice. The belief that "the heart wants what it wants" is any kind of valid justification stands next to making "the right moves", where even the Mindbound can't always explain what that is, or how they know. The Heartbound enshrine unique individuality with the wild (and often destructive) relationships around them, where the Mindbound's collectivist priorities enshrine their own depersonalization, all as the first steps to seeing a spiritual beauty in rationalizing the world, informed decisions, and the grand procession of cause/effect surrounding us - so, yes, we're not very far from Time/Space after all. These obsessions with emotions both lead to facades, but notably different ones: if a Heartbound has different faces, it's because they all reflect the overflowing, interwoven passions of "a deep soul"; if a Mindbound has differences faces, they are tools employed to achieve a tangible result. While many classes employ masks, those bound to Heart and Mind will do so at the most extreme levels, where the Heartbound play out dynamics between their own increasingly embellished constructs, and the Mindbound are more likely to embrace puzzles, paperwork, and philosophy now that all the messy stuff is ~~repressed~~ regulated.

Don't ever forget that Heart is between Rage and Time - just because they get all gooey over romance doesn't mean they're pushovers. Things can - and will - get raw.

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HOPE: Fantasy, Utopia, Trying, Heroism, Inspiration, Reinvention, Perfection, Impossibility, Suspension of Disbelief, Denial, Sugarcoating, Silver Linings, Optimism,

RAGE: Truth, Harsh Reality, Rigid Structure, Disillusionment, Compromise, Sanity, Memory, Laws that Bind, Limitation, Pragmaticsm, Doubt, Bitterness, Defeatism

The Hope aspect veers further from Space than Mind did, where “Ideal risks” sharpen into “million-in-one shots that fix everything”; Rage gets its eponymous name from centering on the most obtrusive emotion of all, and all worldly obtrusions that (should) evoke it. Now having “Hope” as a driving force sounds incredible, but often *sounding* incredible is all it’s got; the Hope aspect is handicapped, where its hypothized miracles are so intense it defies application, conditioning a resignation that it can (or even *should*) only exist as wishful thinking. The Hopebound have some bad habits of well-intentioned lying, empty promises, and embracing/encouraging a chipper attitude as if that itself is a solution. On the other hand, going forward with its wild ideas makes for great speeches and terrible strategies, as one might expect of a dogma literally opposed to reality; whether through manipulation or fervor, the Hope aspect is very dangerous in its ability to appear as anything but. More than contrast, Rage is almost some kind of natural predator to Hope, with a fetishization of disappointment and wake-up-calls. This bitterness is not exactly *compassionate*, but is seen as a justice: hatred is honest, memory defines us, failure teaches us, apologies are worthless, and the world’s cruelties exist for a reason...right? Rage is, despite itself, a dogma, and will often mistrust facts and testimony unless it is satisfyingly caustic. If this gets out of hand, the pursuit of “truthier truths” dismisses anything outside it’s manufactured mythology, while the Ragebound no longer feel the need to prove their points; an “idea” of reality is just as subject to hypocrisy as Time, even if the intention is a grim sobriety. While both aspects can motivate and shake foundations, having your head in the clouds or feet on the ground work better as methodology - not the point.

I don’t know why clowns are reoccuring imagery, but it keeps happening.

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LIGHT: Symbology, Answers, Fortune, Luck, Destiny, Storytelling, Conclusions, Association, Elaboration, Fate, Coherency, Holistics, Payoff, Hints, Canon, Cliches,
VOID: , Maybe, I dunno, Whim, Flippancy, Dumb Fun, Confusion, Guesswork, Rumours, Myth, Nonsense, Silence, Mystery, Secrets, Irrelevancy, Fanon, Pumpkins

The Light aspect’s presentation would make you believe it is an impartial seeker of wisdom, enlightenment, and clarity - but the fact

that it's one notch off from Time gives away the feral nature. The mechanism of Time is to see humanity as obligations and functions, winning or dying in grand conflict; all Light does is expand where Time reduces, turning blunt judgements into resplendent archetypes. They are both aspects that pursue desperate catharsis, either in the bleeding hand that must feel, or the burning eye that must see. Of course, Time is as much its violent ambitions as it is the reflective introspection of how those ambitions have tainted humanity; Light's complexity compounds, and it's lust for answers only answers itself. The aspect that pertains to relevant information ironically obscures the most relevant fact of all: stories are *comforting* more often than they are *true*. The ability to connect dots does not mean the dots *should* be connected, leaving Lightbound chasing a "grand destiny" they don't realize they're inventing. "Luck" may be the more accurate name, but Lightbound find it difficult to admit their worldview hinges on coincidence; Light's golden flame is not as hot as Time's, but it will burn books to stave off the chilly vacuum. The Void aspect is Space's somehow-more-depressing sibling, finding value in exactly the kind of unsatisfying lack of payoff Light languishes over. Void revels in uncommitted ambiguity, chasing incoherent flights of fancy; myths hold more gravitas when not investigated, and hunches can motivate without explanation or justification. Of course, where Lightbound are dangerously overcertain of all-they-can-be, the Voidbound...well, "lack". Whatever class they are is composed of values they - by definition - cannot articulate, where self-reflection challenges self-confidence. Lightbound rarely see their true potential, but where Voidbound often do, they simply do not recognize it as such.

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BREATH: The Future, "The Easy Way", Trust in Intuition, Freedom, The Wind, Trailblazing, Individuality, Contentment, Freeflow, Calm, Forgive, Forget, Boredom
BLOOD: The Past, "The Hard Way", Trust in Others, Bonds, Oaths, Promises, Grudges, Family, Judgement, Suffering, Comraderie, Ordeals, Stress, Sacrifice, Debt, Scars, Guilt,

The second axis of aspects really couldn't care less if the mind is looking internal or external, which makes them the least reflective on what "composes" the human spirit. Yet, this lack of internal interrogation makes them very reliable to hold on to, trusting others at face value as much as themselves. Breath's forward momentum is as contagious as it is indefatigable, where structure and justification are unnecessary compared to a completely sincere "Everything will work itself out". Blood, meanwhile, is the most hyper-saturated acrimony of pessimistic suffering, coalesced into an equally powerful

promise of “No matter how bad things get, we will always have each other”. Whatever capacity for leadership a class has is doubled when bound to either of these aspects, but neither is perfect; it’s a dogma that is farthest from the tools to recognize itself, bouncing only off its opposed extreme. Breath’s assurances easily turn incestuous, resolving itself of the need to assert itself and leaving Breathbound classes (and any who follow them) “stalled” without a clear objective. The Blood aspect mirrors this, where the burden of suffering loops into a purposeless sunk cost fallacy, making it a hard sell to the very friends a Bloodbound class requires to identify itself. Faith in principle redoubles itself, where actual *contentment* was the objective of Time and Space (even though, admittedly, Space was better at it). Breath doesn’t care if you’re bored or depressed, it only wants you relaxed; Blood doesn’t care what kind of relationship you’re building, and will easily pardon - or even *encourage* - abuse. They’re very powerful aspects with very single-minded disciples, but leaders do well to *listen*, not just talk.

It’s dramatic in the comic. It’s more sobering in reality.

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LIFE: Solutions, Health, Smiling, Social Obligations, Support, Stability, Harmony, Growth, Appearences, Teamwork, Nature, Nurture, Food, Saftey, Complacency
DOOM: Problems, Sickness, Spiralling, Dysfunction, Isolation, Fatalism, Depression, Coping, Crying, Venting, Rot, Decay, Rest, Reprieve, Resignation, Closure

The Life aspect resides between Breath and Light, sharing some of the “archetype obligation” from Light with a more essential idealism - the only story being told is “and everyone lived happily ever after”. The Lifebound strive for health, sustainability, emotional wellness, cheerful communities, and fetishizes the smallest steps to get there. On a surface level, it seems like there’s no downsides - but the keyword is surface. The Life aspect still shares weaknesses with Light, misunderstanding impression and substance; trying to make people *look* healthy feels as valid as *being* healthy, all while far easier to engineer. Even this reliable practicality is a double edged sword, as the Life aspect never runs out of ways to slot itself into others lives, and self-perpetuates by trying to kill the voice that protests - “burnout” is in the realm of the Doom aspect, the *enemy*. Lifebound classes will always over-exert past their limits, and struggle to set (or keep to) boundries and safeguards, which makes for a fitting irony: Doombound classes are some of the easiest fuckers to get along with in the world. Between Void and Blood, Doom amps up (or, down?) the

dissatisfaction of Void without tripping into Blood's responsibilities - or possibly any. The Doom aspect venerates the act of languishing, of losing, and the relief of not having a goddamn thing to prove to anyone anymore. Sure, the unpleasantness is all front and center, but that's the advantage of opposing Life's Stepford Smile: you know where you stand. The rudest sentiments are all in the open, no one's a threat, everything's peaceful...though, nothing's getting done. If the Doombound have a drawback, it's that "sympathetic" is not enough for everyone, no matter how much they try to encourage it. Of course, trying to change your mind would mean positively applying themselves, which is counted as a moral failure. All things in moderation...

It seems much more culturally accepted that someone's "healing proccess" might involve staying at home for awhile, away from everyone, eating a bucket of ice cream and listening to country music. Any person on this paticular axis is going to have very, very strong opinions about which is more important, and when it's permittable. Hopefully I've made it clear that they both have their place - or, maybe I swung too hard on the other side.

I've often mused on this (and responded to the understandable skepticism that I'm making a big deal out of nothing) - people sometimes wobble on the aspects clockwise and counter-clockwise, and it's not impossible to see a gradient. Is there truly such a clean split when it comes to people, or at least measured in percentages? It feels right to assume people are messier than 12 defaults, but I've still not seen anyone actually truly pivot to a new primary OR class; that's with alot of investigating of people young and old, often asking family about certain people in my life. You can trace the same steps, and hear the same cliches, even 40 years ago. People follow blueprints, and if there's any way out, I'd honestly consider it preferable - as is, we play the cards we're dealt.

ATTUNE/ADAPT

(WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO PROVE?)

Classes don't exist in a vacuum, where there's a gradient in how they deal with "what is right" (AKA their aspect). "Attuning" tries to cohese and define the default of the belief, where "Adapt" refers to the rearrangement and even defiance of these conventions. While "principle" and "pragmatism" may also get the point across, it doesn't always go that way, as an attuned aspect can feel like practical fact, and an adapted aspect can feel righteous and obligated. It's also worth noting that adapted aspects often feel more fragile and disruptive, but this is often a matter of perception; there's value and danger to any combination of classes and aspects, and attuned ones can be just as precarious while feeling very innegotiable to the individual holding them. The horseshoe bent of intensity will affect the volume of these ideologies, but anyone can find something they'd die for; what varies most is the certainty that the current situation qualifies.

Regardless, every class can more or less be translated as "someone who [verbs] their aspect". It sounds simplistic, but, at a person's core,

it’s usually the guiding principle behind a huge swath of their personality and actions. From these perspectives, “goodness” is inherently:

Easy - Intuitive - Merit - Static | Variable - Tricky - Subjective - Effort

Which correlates into the class pairs:

Masters - Fae - Servants - Prophets | Magicians - Outlaws - Royals - ???

The associated verbs (more or less) correspond as such:

Command - Create - Exploit - Know | Change - Steal - Destroy - Conquer

Or, in other words to get the point across...

Embody - Grow - Weaponize - Study | Nudge - Fix - Censor - Rewrite

...Or to be *harsh...*

Subjugate - Propogate - Bloat - Condone | Tamper - Cheat - Violate - Corrupt

With all that in mind, it’s time to get to the juicy parts...

...in, just a second. One more thing.

AN APOLOGY IN ADVANCE
(SURGERY WITH RUSTY TOOLS)

I need to be clear that this is going to sting. Beyond a certain levity and teasing, there will be hurtful accusations made of both crimes in the past, or the potential future, and I will mark these as symptoms of immutable conditions that we cannot and should not downplay, let alone deny. I will not pretend that there are not more diplomatic alternatives to describing classes, and that my own fixation on confrontation has not influenced my faith in my method - I have my own delusions, after all.

I can say that, no matter what thrills I get in hurting people, I can (and want to) give it a point; bad habits, chronic cycles of disfunction, methods of abuse, the languages of self loathing, all of these sore spots are worth hitting by virtue of being *unique*. If I say “this class is heroic and looks out for their friends”, then specifications become increasingly blurry by our own aspirations - *everyone* wants to be heroic and look out for their friends. There’s alot of potential here to focus on who we could be, and to make that exciting, but it’s too easily lost, squandered, and cheapened if we lead with dopamine and celebration. I don’t want you to say “Oh, this class looks cool, I wonder if I’m one!” - I want you to say “I’m in this picture and I don’t like it” before I get to any compliments. It’s unpleasent, but it hightens self-consciousness in the unsure, and weeds out the romantics who would otherwise fuck with my flowcharts.

Even with that in mind, I cannot promise parity; the third paragraph will always be the hardest hitting (even a few of the first ones won't be flattering), but acknowledging a full sum of damage to oneself and those around us still won't be even for everyone. **Some classes are higher risk than others, and acknowledging that is important to mitigate that risk (to say nothing of WARNING other people of specific toxicity and excuses).** To come to terms with our class, to come to terms with *ourselves*, we cannot use rose-tinted glasses, or pretend the crimes of the past didn't matter or won't happen again. The ugly side of us is the most distinct, the toughest to survive and the trickiest to sanitize - you fight that, you fight your best qualities alongside it. You want someone else's best qualities? Sheesh, go nuts, imitate and be the person you know you're not - but you have to know you're not. I'll have a whole section on discrepancies later, if anyone's still fiesty.

I think I've made my point that if we just want a classpect to "make us sound cool and be fun", we miss the bigger point. We're talking about entire human lives here - the good, the bad, the questions we'll be asking ourselves for decades and in our darkest moments. I'm trying to articulate the question for people who misinterpret it, while mentioning what answers are likely to work and which aren't. It's up to the individual to choose what answer works for them, and some classes have more choice and leeway than others - it's not fair, but it's true. Classes are an anatomy of our wants, fears, and preconceptions; it's hard explaining that it's static for us, and not universal for the people around us. The best way I have to prove that it even *exists* is to hit you in every sore spot, cut every artery, pinch every nerve, all while pointing to the chart. The same things that bother us will not bother other people, and however uncomfortable that makes you feel is one more hint to what your class is.

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PROPHETS

(SCHOLARS, INVESTIGATORS, BYSTANDERS)

The first step of attunement is the last step of grief: acceptance. That the aspect, the world, simply is; blameless and beautiful, good and bad both. There are obvious limitations, which is difficult to describe to someone who feels fuffiled following the rules without err. It is a quiet faith, and when weilded correctly, it permits a field of answers as accurate as they are unpleasent, immutable but highlighting other opportunities. Emboldened, and you've got someone who **knows** more than they should.

MAGES (OR MAGI) are know-it-all's who never feel the need to prove it, and position themselves in situations where they never have to. Comfortable with isolation, disinterested in praise, awkward at basic social interaction, Mages are often less your friend and more just "around" - barring very, very rare pledges of complete trust so long as they are not betrayed. Most comfortable in personal duties and passion projects, it's often a continued effort from friends to keep them involved; even then, it's a Mage staple to suddenly and abruptly leave conversations without a proper goodbye. They're used to their advice going unheeded, and often aware that their insights are purely personal anyways - but it's still useful, far more than they frame it as. It is a complicated dance to keep them socially involved without either party being frustrated by a Mage's weirdness, penchant for inaction, and distaste for convention...but there's loyalty and conviction in

there that the whole world can’t take away, with humble perspectives that might be just what you need.

Mulder. I’m talking about Mulder from the X-files. I guess Captain Holt from Brooklyn 99 too. The more people come to grips with that precise kind of weirdo, the better. I know quite a few depictions of atypicals meet the bill, but...well, I’m a living counterpoint, as are many aspies I’ve aggressively psychoanalyzed. Still, Pages and Mages are awfully close...there might be some commonality, as the isolation and difficulty connecting that comes with that condition tends to lead to Mages. After all, it’s hard to attend others when your own place in the world is so consistantly tumultuous and a 24/7 problem. Maybe. This is guesswork on my end from the limited evidence, but I at least know Mages who aren’t autistic and people who are autistic who aren’t Mages, and that’s at least enough to kill some steryotypes.

Mages **know** their aspect - appreciate, understand, observe, *that’s it*, and purely personally too. They’re attuned to the bare minimum, appreciating the greater whole without needing to save the world, their friends, or even themselves. If it goes wrong and screws them over, if it limits them in any way, they don’t miss a beat; even if they’re proven egregiously incorrect and everything they’ve fought for and believed in was a lie, they’ll probably bounce back in a week tops. They walk this path of virtue and dignity alone, because they can and no one seems to agree with them (as readily as they’d like) anyways. These beliefs embolden them on their career, hobbies, or other pursuits, which they pursue unerringly. They want little, and what they do want is tied up in their beliefs; the fact that their guiding principles may lean selfish is often a recognized occupational hazard, which they cannot* change and do not want to. Even when it lacks flair or high stakes, their read of their aspect is still something fuffiling and engrossing; it’s their simple truths, their inescapable fate, their private passions, their singular instructions to life, the car they expect to break down every now and again, and their parent who won’t let them out to play. It just is.

They definately learned that early: “This is life, and there’s no changing that.” A collection of childhood experiences to numb you to things going wrong...hell, even Sollux as a Mage of Doom can’t even die correctly or have an apocalypse he was ready for, can he?

Also, this neutrality often extends to politics: Mages either refuse to get involved, or personally represent the Overton Window. It’s not their best quality, I’ll admit, but it’s more proof they really are people who always try to find truth in the middle of extremes. I’m mentioning this here more out of *hoping* it’s not a default.

Mages get their advantage from having innately stable pride, ambition, and self-perception, but these are all still their foundational components; they’re quite possibly the most stubbornly single-minded force of nature the human psyche can muster, as unlikely to brag about it as they are to question it. Mages almost never provide help (or basic company) when (or how) you want them to, and their weird hunches and compulsions can easily become narrow-minded to the point of self-sabotage. Their lack of interest in others affairs blurs into a lack of responsability, often standing by while friends suffer from

either not knowing the solution or not knowing a reason that suits them. Even if they are persuaded, Mages can be slapdash with fixes from impatience and inflexibility. At it's absolute worst, Mages still haven't bridged their connection with others but act on their behalf regardless, confronting dangers that are either overblown or that can't be solved by one guy who watched too many movies. It is not enough to know, and it is not enough to act - Mages have to *listen*, because it's the only way these interventions are going to work out right. Sure, it's gross, and feels weird, and fucks with their flowcharts, but Mages are more than their monotonic self-image...it's just pulling teeth to try and convince them of that.

I love my Mage friends, but I've known them long enough to see them go pretty far sometimes, in much more drastic ways than Meulin's broken crack ships. Had some tense arguments. We always bounce back. Mostly. I certainly LOOK for more stakes in my friendships, more bloodied hugs and assurances of true companions, but...it's not that you *don't* get that with Mages, it's just that it's always in their own weird way. If you hang out enough, you pass a threshold where they'd die for you (in certain contexts they agree to). There is zero fanfare.

Prospit Mages live in a state of perpetual contentment. They have a clear interpretation of how to be a good person, and are fairly confident it won't be much trouble - or crowded. Their "perfect approach to life" might sound naive, but the fact that it works for them (and them alone) is the only proof they need...so who are you to attack their happiness? They often have an oddball sense of humor, which might make people a bit uncomfortable but it's completely fine if they're the only one who laughs at it. Sure, they're agreeable and not likely to take offense to much, but squaring up for direct conflict ends poorly. Whatever the dynamic was before, it can very easily turn into "I'm right, and if you don't see that, I'm leaving". Here's a hint: it's not a bluff. They might be wrong, but it's *never* a bluff. Mages just overall don`t care to argue or prove their points, but the Prospit variants seem the least bothered by the resulting scorn, to the point of expecting it. Likewise, they do their best to steer clear of disagreements between friends and withhold weighing in; "principle" is the name of the game.

You meet one, and it's like, you never met anyone like this before. They're weird and static and it's like pulling teeth hanging out with them if they've got more important things to do...and then, you meet another. And then you get reccomended Snufkin clips on Youtube. And you realize, people like this just, exist.

Originally, I thought Sollux's more standoffish traits were his Derse side. I'm not always sure. Hell, I hope Hussie knew.

Derse Mages live in a state of perpetual confusion. They grow into their class, and start out with a surprising lack of confidence. They fumble at how to make themselves useful to others, often not sure exactly where they're supposed to be and what they're supposed to do. They may look to others if they lack faith in their own voice, but

this is almost always temporary - and should be. No matter how listless or vulnerable they may appear, they're still bizarrely resistant to encouragement; they're going to figure themselves out their way, on their time. Sometimes, this means unceremoniously giving up on what they *thought* their dream was, and wandering towards where they feel they'll be needed in a completely different field with a completely different set of friends and/or family (though at least they're more likely to have friends they listen to). With maturation, they'll find contentment doing what they feel they were "supposed to do" and politely yet firmly reject offers to do anything else or more. Eventually, despite it all, they'll be just the kind of impartial advisor with their own private agenda you'd expect (and that Prospit Mages kinda just *start* as), but with a little more bite.

Meulin is surrounded by alot of eccentricity that makes her a difficult pick for a "quintessential" Derse Mage. I have my theories on Diemen, but the best example I can pull is Lemonhope, Mob of Mob Psycho 100, or certain depiction of Luigi. At least, those are prominent fictions. I'm happy enough to have a few real ones in my life. They're reliable, and more likely to play video games with me than the Prospits.

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Stoic. No further words needed, no embellishment or exaggeration except to play concilliatory to those confused. The deeper nature of this world provides law and language, distilled from the essance of whispers and wisps; you put your trust in elemental energy, permit it, and in return are made enigmatic. You have made science of magic most call madness, and document all findings in a study with no conclusion besides the proccess itself. You are pariah to politics, and the squabbles men make fighting over the shells and scrap secondary always to the greater game afoot - irrelevant, distracted, they shout and you murmer, perpendicular, askew. The Mage in their tower; still stoic, static, stressed at requests of the inept. If they wanted to know, why not look? Even if you alone know, even if you would, nothing changes, nothing could. Not what they want, at least, expecting the fact to meet fiction in parity. Real magic isn't like that - but as addendum and not absolute, application is attainable, and atrophies affixed apathy.

Recite what you know, but be open to surprises.

Oh, yeah, you're currently reading the version of this document with my bad poetry attached. I'll make another one eventually that keeps things cleaner, for those interested - I know I'm pushing it with 3 fonts.

I dunno. It feels right. Skip it if you want, but, I want to do some things for me.

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SEERS are fascinating people by virtue of how much they resemble the trope of movie characters designed entirely to dump exposition: content to observe the stories of others, present in every conversation with a perspective from the outside, and verbose despite a seemingly non-existant ego. Every Seer is ready to give advice to others on how to solve their problems and live virtuously - if they don't, or it's not appreciated, they are surprisingly patient in debates-bordering-on-arguments to get there (and maybe change their mind along the way). Despite the importance of these beliefs, Seers often compensate professionalism with a notch of playfulness, making them more approachable and keeping them in the loop if they're still processing their thoughts (and because screwing with people is funny). This behavior blurs into their principles, where they often bluff certainty as sparing moments of authority that are otherwise irrelevant to their friendships and group dynamics…though, depending on the individual, they may advertise themselves as a hyper-specific-expert-on-one-subject without the foreplay, which transparently shows the limitations of their beliefs and experiences. They have a penchant for hanging around erratic or unstable people, keeping them on the right path as readily as they tell everyone else how to co-exist with them. Their personal eccentricities often mask the fact that they rarely personally execute the plans they keep drafting - and sometimes, they should.

Both Prophets are equally inclined towards simple appreciation and quiet surrender to one's aspect, but Seers are interested in everyone else's place in the universe. By suggesting both optimization and restrictions, they subtly encourage Mage-like traits and worldviews: to **understand** their aspect as it pertains to everyone, rationalizing it as an undercurrent to all behaviors, neutral and inescapable. The comfortability of their (somewhat rambling) lectures speaks to this, and they know how to frame good news or bad news on their "unbiased" terms. If you've had a long day, if you've screwed up, if life won't let up, Seers can supply the quiet resolve of Mages to the people who really need it - and in turn, they see beauty in other people's lives, how they intersect and weave to make more than the sum of their parts. However, this also means that it's not very concrete or structured, and Seers struggle when pressed for clarity. While the outline is consistent, they play fast and loose with the details in order to stay relevant, highlighting the importance of levity so that curveballs do not invalidate them. To this end, their aspect is evolving vaugeries; predictions phrased as fate, warnings phrased as advice, desires phrased as universal, admiration phrased as fact, resignations phrased as impossibilities, as the tide you shouldn't bother fighting - at least, not without their help, and certainly not while they're not looking.

Couldn’t tell you what the conditions are. “Clear assessments that no one’s going to listen to anyways I guess” seems like the root, but...well, that’s a decision a child makes, and can come from a variety of different circumstances. The only consistency I can find is that they didn’t feel heard, but I suppose when that’s your primary concern...

The catch with every passive class is that the expectations they push to others often do not include themselves. While Seers try to stay on the backlines, they can still be trouble when they’re too certain they know where everyone should be; yes, they don’t get too involved, and never force anyone to do anything, but they do know how to push buttons (again, probably a little too well, especially towards people they actually care about). Often, a “prettier” picture is preferred over practical concerns, and many will shirk away from preventative measures or course-correction. When Seers drift from “and our beautiful world keeps spinning” into more “don’t rock the boat” lectures, it’s understandable to question their motive. Seers will sometimes get selfish for something besides peace of mind, but that only highlights the issue that a Seer’s personal well-being is *always* outside their academia. Their delights and relationships are rather “off the record” compared to their fixed role as a witness...or a pawn, snuffed out as “acceptable losses” to someone else’s game. Sometimes this is noble enough they can say it to your face, but not always; Seers have a habit of falling off the wagon silently and without telling anyone, getting swallowed up by vices or a bad crowd. They’re *very* good at changing the subject or downplaying this, so it’s probably best to check in on them every once and awhile; ironically, you’ll probably get a clearer picture asking a mutual friend, and not the Seer themself.

Both of Homestuck’s Seers display this (the important ones; Kankri is 50% meme), coincidentally at the same time. I suppose Terezi had *signs*, sure, but even pointing at PhemieC’s incredible work, it’s more Karkat’s song that addresses her “noose of excuses” rather than Terezi’s herself. It’s actually kinda fitting it would be from someone on the outside...and a little bittersweet, thinking of some old friends.

Prospit Seers are unashamed of how they want everyone to act and what their read of the situation is. This earnestness ensures they have a rather static place in friend groups - anyone who wants to listen to them is already listening, and anyone else knows what to expect. This makes them a bit “one-note”, but this is from intentionally embracing their role, not from actual simplicity; you learn more about them from their hobbies, not their conversations, even if they’re explicitly trying to keep your attention somewhere else. They seem to put *too* much of their faith in their beliefs, and can be unprepared for a lack of clear and clean solutions, where they believe the world is either simple or it ought to be. With misfortune rationalized and downplayed to cope, they’re more prone to believe their excuses that it doesn’t - or shouldn’t - bother them. They probably (hopefully) don’t think they

literally know everything, but they *do* think that the world can be cohesively understood with enough patience and enough steps back...but while they're trying to clarify a greater whole that will never stop being blurry, they don't notice the growing distance to their friends, or how close they're getting to falling off a cliff.

Terezi is weird. Kankri is too, and while I know a few media characters who align with their charactaristics, I don't actually know any of this variant in person - at least, none that I can recall. Hopefully I do a good enough job with everything else to help some people work things out through the proccess of elimination.

Maybe that archetype of "nosy girl reporter" fits here...or, maybe that's too hyperbolized. It's hard to tell sometimes.

Derse Seers are unashamed of how they want everyone to act, but weave double-talk and sarcasm around it to the point that you might forget and let your guard down. Their observations are more consciouslly malleable, and they're more accepting of depressing outcomes and dysfunction as "just the way things are". At the same time, they're the most likely to meddle and give people a few shoves in certain directions - aiming for certain results while not giving the game away, and not above some aggressive and personal jabs if they think they have to. Beyond business, most can be very chummy, and know how to have a casual chat and level things out; ready to jump into action, but shoot the shit all the same until then. Still, nothing quite throws them off-balance like flipping the spotlight. They can deflect most days, pivot the conversation away, generally knowing the ways they're a wreck already while laughing about it...but with enough pressure and reveals, it stops being funny.

Tricky people. Even with Rose as a constant character for nearly the whole comic, it's hard to see the generalized traits seperated from her own singular identity. I keep thinking of Diane from Bojack, as a media example, and even Evelyn Parker from Cyberpunk is remarkably well written for her brief appearences. More importantly, I knew a friend from a punk house I used to live in; Hopebound and proud, and helped keep things going. Impatient with others sometime, sure, but she always knew how to bounce back and persuade others in directions - or, guilt them, sometimes. I still love her. I hope she's okay. Funnily enough I thought she was a Witch originally...I'll, get to that.

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Unarmed by choice, a voice heard often as readily as unheeded, unneeded. To a village or nation, public or private, you are privy to the prophecies of all who meet your distant eyes; enchanted and enlightened, humbled and in service. You see how they live, struggle, die, all in the greater scope - twists of fate, connected and echoing, evolving and conspiring. You help them brace for it when they ask you to break it; soothe the nerves of the dualy destined and doomed, longing for hope and help that won't or will. If there is a calling, a request, then it's no mortal toil; if the Seer steers, it's only to guide the errant and erratic. Impartial, unbiased, blameless, overconfidant - if

anyone *truly will* defy destiny, only you know the fleeting opportunities, unnoticed and unmissed. Yet, with every move on the board predicted, and all cards revealed, those entrusted so often chase ruin. Seers are sought to affirm what we want, not are, and such ignorance circumvents wisdom - but if it can, if it wins, was it ever cheating? Tradition is wisdom that's past its time, while rituals mask the intuition that invented them. It is the complaceny of the learned that kills the thrill of discovery, and atrophies the hand that can cut the strings of fate - or the throats of tyrants.

For every answer, ask two questions; you're a player, not a pawn.

Aut viam invenium aut facium.

MAGICIANS

(GUIDES, TINKERERS, PRETENDERS)

Adapting an aspect isn't so drastic as to warp and misshape it carelessly - at the first tier of it, there's more you can accept than take issue with. Without meaning to do much, the rest is brought with it; simple and subtle, a spark of magic **changes** everything. Of course, magic is under scrutiny, and these two know that best; it's easy for them to assume they are frauds and charlatans, manipulating people under the pretext of care. To the weilder, it is most obvious what trickery and misdirection is employed...but to an observer, it is more obvious what *cannot* be explained. Even if the practitioner does not believe their presentation, the goodwill manifested proves a point: magic is fucking real.

WITCHES are guileful innovators, finding a path forward from the sidelines or in the wake of others. Playful and imaginative, they enjoy the little things in life, and try to avoid drama or stress; however, they maintain a firm grip at the reigns of their own life, and don't budge easy to the wills of others (even if they pretend to). Curious and carefree whim is cultivated into their own little world to carry with them, to be shared with a handful of people they trust; it's not like they're *hurting* anyone (usually), it's just an idle apathy to unpleasant facts, often annoying those who found it so endearing under different circumstances. They bluff past alot of obstacles in their life, readily lean on stronger voices, and almost always land on their feet. Witches come off as kind, agreeable, "cute", and altogether straightforward...and while *some* of this is true, Witches will readily deny any and all of it if they feel cornered. Dry resentment and unworthiness brim below the surface, built on unchecked assumptions, with pain placated by relationships and distractions.

Witches will always have their own interpretation of how high the stakes are, of how genuine they were, of vapidity or hidden depths of those around them, and trying to directly poke holes in the inconsistencies of these speeches tends to make things worse. Ultimately, the skewed truth is *their* truth, and it's as important for others to realize how vitally important it is to Witches as it is for Witches themselves to not undersell everything they're capable of.

Have to go harder on this one. Play all nice, and it's all surface. Not accurate enough. That's the thing about Witches, whether it's media examples or firsthand/secondhand experiences with them, everyone always misses the point, remembers them wrong, while Witches themselves encourage misinformation. It's a tragedy - their tragedy. So frustrating, but there's no easy way to take a swing without confirming everything they already assume. I'll be honest, I'm probably still too close to this.

It feels pertinent to mention I'm sticking by a rule of neutral language, both for gender-questioning types, and because I don't want to firmly claim classes are all AMAB or all AFAB in the name of proffesionally acknowledging the potential for exceptions, despite the mounted evidence to the contrary. In case I haven't been clear, I don't think it *matters* if chromosomes link to classes, and it feels damaging to progressive causes to argue on that basis. I bring this up because Witches appear, in 100% of individuals I have observed, to be AFAB only. Wiccans are just so goddamn popular in queer circles, I need to be *crystal clear* that anyone saying "Look at me, the AMAB Witch" is 99.99% of the time a misunderstanding. If you're trans, you're valid, and you can't let your class turn into a burden you feel you need to shed just because of a couple of syllables. If you're a transman Witch feeling irked from the other side of things, I'd just swap the name to "Druid", but if you go for "Witcher" I feel I have to pre-emptivly make a lengthy explanation for why Geralt of Rivea would not count. TLDR: everything written here, because we're still talking about class #3, first tier of adaptation. Maybe there really is an exception out there, but don't get grumpy cause I won't offer easy answers - if this document does a good enough job letting you spot them, then you'll be prepared to spot yourself. Don't fuck with my flowcharts. Please. For your own sake.

Witches are not especially complicated, but they are subtle. Their instructions are a blend of expressing their interests, hiding their gripes, wrapped around adapting to others expectations (or the expectations of others expectations). Yes, okay, fine, just calling it "playful curiosity" gets the point across, but it's a throughline they live their life by: to **change** their aspect, adjusting what personally bothers them in the moment without ever straining themselves. While this might sound selfish (and can be), Witches do *want* to help their friends and make the world a better place. It can be exciting trying to share their insight and spirit, but it's a delicate thing; their influence stays in their bubble, and it's likely to pop if they reach out too far, or if anyone asks too many questions. Witches do their best work when it all seems straightforward, and that can make their skewed perception of stakes an advantage - to not overthink grand ramifications in the heat of things, dragged down by other's dramatics. A Witch's aspect is whatever they need it to be, yet always a little more than that; distractions from fatalism, carefree trespassing, twitchy fingers, white lies, natural flow, romanticized tragedies, bittersweet contentment, games of mischief, unabashed compassion, customer service smiles, and a nameless mark on the world - always, forever and only, <u>theirs.</u>

Childhood environments vary, but the approach seems consistent: distractions, always, from issues they couldn't resolve. Could be boredom, loneliness, or abusive parents. Doesn't matter how bad it sounds, they'll walk it off - with a limp.

There are snags and schisms with Witches, but it's important to address them carefully: expecting them to fit a mold, or endure stress longer than they can, is so often what leads to arguments. Of course, Witches will usually *attempt* to meet requests (real or imagined) initially, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of broken masks, hyperbolic heartbreak, and floodgated fatalism as soon as they run out of stamina - the Witch-Spiral-Speech(tm) of "I'm not who you thought I was, I can't be that person, and there's nothing left to say". Burnt bridges (real or imagined) only justify the instincts, meaning that while many people may know them, only a few get close. Witches hold the firmest grip deciding who sees their most genuine, private selves, and even more control deciding which *parts* of that self; illusion and truth are measured in percentages, always still with a secret they're prepared to die with. With this in mind, Witches are often most comfortable with those that fit their fantasies, who don't pry past what's offered, who accept their excuses of "I'm just being silly/I don't know what I'm talking about", and accommodate their perceptions of worthlessness rather than challenge it. There's only so far they can fall back on justifications of whim, human nature, or apathy, and they know that; Witches don't expect (or even *want*) to be saved, forgiven, or understood. Lashing out and demonizing Witches only feeds the self-hatred swirling at the root of it - and with that in mind, it's important to specify that Witches are *never* as bad as they say they are. They just want to exist, relax, and cause trouble on their terms - to be heard as an individual, with a legacy no greater than "fun" and "helped people who deserved it more". If they keep thinking there's no place for them, they'll keep running past all the ones they have.

It's hard to know what to say. I'm not a therapist, and there's no clean solution here. Maybe there never is, but I can't even pretend on this one, you know? Witches are tricky; I can't just say "be braver", "trust yourself more", "trust others more", or anything else you could stick on a bumper sticker. Sometimes the problems aren't problems altogether. Sometimes that's bullshit, sometimes that's just their bullshit, and they'll sort it or not sort it at their discretion. If they put all their trust in someone to define them, it's usually someone sketchy. I don't know. Every move feels like the wrong move. All I can really say here is, they're not alone. There's others with their archetype who've gone through all the same thrills, and all this "my friends would never accept these parts of me" thoughts aren't always true. At least, they keep trying to engineer scenarios that *make* them true, and I'm hurt seeing it happen over and over again.

You know, as far as personal rules go, I accept people making "bad" decisions so long as they're informed. Past all the showmanship, I just hope any Witch reading this becomes a bit more self-aware about what they're doing, and what their options are.

Prospit Witches are much more Sabrina than crop-killing monster. They're positive, polite, and very idealistic; reality often meets them harshly, and not if they can help it. While they can be tricky to pin down in driving purpose, their track record often speaks for itself -

happy hobbyists, an aura of amicability, casually opinionated, contextually careless. Their presentation is mirthful often despite their circumstances; maybe it feels like they decided a long time ago they didn't want to grow up, but it's a conscious decision made by a sober mind, and not held past the point of reason. They'll...*try* to stick it out for friends who ask too much or rub them the wrong way, but they also might ghost and hope no one notices. If this all sounds like sunshine, that's because it's designed to be: Prospit Witches are everything already discussed, but take every high and low in stride. Masks will drop without fanfare, then snap back to their face as soon as the moment's bitterness is exchanged; misfortune is endured as long as no one else is getting hurt, alternatives writ off as "too much trouble". Their skewed stakes are not just preferred, but trusted, blossoming blind spots that always come back to bite later. Their health and heart are still very personal, but occasionally disclosed quickly if they get a good vibe about someone - though, just as quickly revoked if it goes sour. They're prone to reestablish their walls and routines even if critical secrets are unveiled, simply refusing to acknowledge the lost status quo; press it, even with stated goals of building something better, and the Witch-Spiral-Speech(tm) is still on the table. All in all, Prospit Witches are very good at hiding their scars (metaphorical or otherwise), but tend to be oblivious if those wounds are still bleeding - or they just stopped caring.

Jade Harley is weird. Good, but weird. Chixie from Friendsim, despite only having her aspect off a notch, helps provide a more "grounded" example of a Prospit Witch. I think one of the most explored (that I know about, in my narrow sphere of interests) is one of the later minds from Psychonauts 2, which goes the extra mile of making the Witch-Spiral-Speech the boss of that level. Uncanny.

That whole scenario reminds me too much of a friend of mine. I don't think I can show that friend what I wrote here, unless it's a hail-mary of me giving up trying to patch everything splintered between us. If you are reading this - and for all Prospit Witches in general -, I hope you take something from this for the future, even if it sounds more resigned then my usual writing.

Derse Witches are the ones to worry about, but usually more for their sake than yours. They're generally cheery, but not "optimistic", strictly speaking; they're matter-of-fact towards both the world's evils and their own, finding delights within the macabre rather than in spite of it. Appropriately, this compounds their sense of being an "other" to the world, making the dance of masks more intricate and articulated; they can range from dignified-yet-damaged sages, wild free spirits, apathetic sadists, or innocent brats. While all this lessens the chance of accidental (or blindly denied) self-sabotage, Derse Witches are prone to simply embrace the collision course: to live on the run, cozy up to volatile individuals, burn bridges within an hour of the transgression, and not look back and see which bad decision is going to be the one that finally catches up to them. More than seclusion, there is a pull to outright suicidal ideation: "You'll be better

off when I’m gone”, said with a smile, ready to rationalize the reactions it incites. Mind you, there’s cracks in this bravado - compassion and hesitation that does not feed the narrative of “hedonistic blight” - but the threat of dropping the knife means they’ll twist it to be taken seriously. If things seem fine, they’d like to believe it’s because they did the mercy of lying to you...but if things *are* better than they seem, if everyone already *knew* the secrets, if there *is* a potential for uncompromised happiness, that doesn’t mean they’ll budge. It’s never about direct problem solving, it’s about trust - no shortcuts, substitutions, or second-tries.

Everyone knows her, even if you haven’t met her. Long phillisophical conversations, weighed down by addictions, screws her boyfriend’s brother and dies before she’s 40. She’s sometimes in the movies, but always in the songs; a diamond who wants to stay coal; the girl who warns you not to fall in love with her.

I have a friend who’s a Derse Witch of Space (she’s the one who made the globe). It is charming how much she resembles Jade Harley, straight down to syntax, hobbies, and even dreams. It’s more unnerving hearing her glee at messing with people’s emotions and watching things unravel, or her equal glee reminiscing on a past of abusive and toxic lovers. I wouldn’t trade her for the world.

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[witch wood willowisp withdraw withhold wilt wonder weak worry wisdom wrinkle WANT work warning walk whim]

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HEIRS are kind, compassionate, and defined by well-intentioned judgements; even if people don’t agree, Heirs always find a way to get a word in without losing the room. They naturally slide into social groups, and quickly establish an enviroment where people look to them for support. They know how to communicate their thoughts effectively and without making things too personal, forcing people to reconcile themselves on their own terms rather than get caught up in a battle of egos. They don’t like friends fighting, mediating disagreements in a variety of ways but always prone to a “I think what Steve is *trying* to say is...” hijacking. Altruistic, determined, and cherished, Heirs are, more often than not, all these things - but the one lie is “carefree”. Underneath the “perfect friend” is someone who thinks everything is going to go to shit if they don’t administrate, and this solemn responsibility is both rarely admitted and rarely up for debate. Heirs avoid recognizing any grand conclusion their small interventions make, but that’s as much humility as it is plausible deniability; no pride for praise, only in deciding everyone else’s best available option every single time. Heirs almost always have a point,

and they almost never have anything to gain...but if they don't or do respectively, they're "sticky" enough in arguments that you might doubt yourself. It's easy to misread an Heir's approach as a lack of confidence (and it might be a little), but often the *implication* of heirarchy is simply preferable. Heirs believe that they alone must be the one who will fix everyone else's problems, but even if they *can*, there's an arrogance in defining what your "problem" is in the first place.

Equius overthinks it, John underthinks it, Mituna doublethinks it - between the three of them, I get it if Heirs seem a little hard to define. I'm privileged to know quite a few, and they're thankfully pretty open to invasive questions - if suddenly hesitant the moment I try to draw conclusions. Not "defensive" just...it's overprotective is all, you know?

Heirs are diligent, despite often coming off as docile. Their programming is simple enough: "make things better for people", with their aspect as a series of nebulous and malleable guidelines. This doesn't mean they're lazy, far from it; Heirs are a living counterbalance, becoming increasingly motivated, protective, and controlling when they feel the situation requires it. This call to action is subtle enough that it can be the only reason they speak up and get creative at all, making their autonomy as individuals completely intertwined with their sense of purpose: they **change** their environment with their aspect, but also **change** themselves into what they think the world needs them to be. This is drawing from the same mask-making tools as Witches, but zero'd in on direction and damage control. Despite all of this, they frequently don't know what's so special about themselves specifically, when it's more obvious from the outside how their track record creates an outline of what they bring to the table. Their aspect is their curious questions, their double-checking, their helpful reminders, their 11th hour miracles, the rare heated argument, the calm hand of suggestion, what they've got under control, the possibilities that can't be ruled out yet, and the eternal well-spring of solutions that truly does feel like an inherited birthright sometimes.

"Chosen One" indeed, but not because they actually *are* destined - the dragon existed before the prophecy. More bluntly, all signs point to an Heir's childhood environment locking in their habits, as they grew up having to be the parent that no one else was being, but *someone* clearly had to be. Even with Homestuck's own, it's easy to see how John and Equius politely argue with the traditions threatening to swallow them. It also explains resentments Heirs often have towards that responsability, as it was always an emergancy situation - something that shouldn't happen twice in a just world. Pity it sticks. Pity they're so good solving everyone else's problems, that people actually *will* ask them to keep doing it despite the damage. And they can. We are so often at the mercy of our delusions.

There is a downside to the rush of endorphins that come with rising to the challenge and saving the day - eventually, you win, and you're no longer needed. To an Heir's credit, they generally (hopefully) don't

directly incite trouble just to play savior, but that makes it a bit more subtle; it means letting people know “I’m always here to listen”, and never turning *down* codependency; it means never saying a crisis is 100% resolved, leaving the door open for relapse; it means casting vague doubts if something’s done without the Heir’s magic touch, implying only one final seal of approval; it means planting themselves in center of very toxic dynamics, being everyone’s shoulder to cry on. Heirs have an alarming addiction to “loops” like these, where they’re placating a crisis rather than closing it. It’s hard for anyone (even them) to notice, since they’re reflexive in framing arguments in other people’s “best interests” - and who’s to say comfort isn’t a substitute for solutions anyways? The cracks are slow, but they add up from one of three reasons: a problem they can’t solve, solving all problems and getting “twitchy”, or pure stressed-out exhaustion. Whichever one it is (or maybe all three), Heirs are finally confronted with their *own* baggage...and that isn’t something they’re prepared for, or want any help with. Who they were feels “fake”, leaving them to drift off and seclude. They might be back in a month. Or a decade. Or never.

John suddenly becoming depressed and Equius suddenly becoming useless weren’t really surprises - it was an inevitability ticking down from the moment they existed. It’s just as inevitable in real life. It’s very difficult getting them to brace for it - hopefully, through this document or whatever else, not impossible.

Prospit Heirs might be frustrating sometimes, but they’re almost impossible to stay mad at. Preffering to live life on autopilot, they perform all an Heir’s duties of questioning everything without questioning their habits, and keep the mood light in all moments inbetween. They don’t overthink their advice, don’t get caught up on grand consequences, and also don’t often think they can be wrong - at worst, what’s a few harmless questions and words of warning? They prefer free-wheeling through volatile situations, ignoring what might be difficult to comprehend and only focusing on resolving what *does* make sense. They’re good listeners, but a little sour if they aren’t making any headway with people, which makes them more likely to quit if they get too frustrated - at least, until the topic gets brought up again. While Prospit Heirs are never *truly* ignorant of the conniptions, affirming it without acknowledging it can make them surprisingly dangerous; overstepping boundries, overtrusting instincts, and outright infantilizing friends can happen casually. Much like Prospit Witches before them, they’d prefer to stick to their routines even if something serious happens, and can be stubbornly resigned if no one plays ball. Confrontations can lead to denial, withdrawl, or simply addressing symptoms and not the root - which is, of course, still a time-bomb of an Atlas Complex. When their patience finally wears thin, their tempers surprise even them; too much feels unfamiliar and

alien, unworkable, all at once. There’s alot bottled up, and they’re not measuring the breaking points.

I’m sure one could laugh and put Spongebob or something here. You wouldn’t be wrong, there’s plenty of happy dorks trying to cheer up sadsacks that play well in media...you just have to realize why real people exhibit these habits. Most of the time, Prospit Heirs are the “generic protagonist hero”. Much like Witches and the “girl next door” archetype, it’s an active effort to keep up, and only fiction provides the mask without the motive.

Homestuck’s own John Egbert can be difficult to read past “comedic dork”, and his gradual depression and lack of energy going forward in the story can feel out of left field. It isn’t. My own brother is a Prospit Heir of Breath, and, while grumpier, he’s done all the same things for all the same reasons, straight down to drifting away from people (and, on a more comedic note, preferring hammers in Monster Hunter, and installing trainers and debug modes for every game we play). Guy puts himself in too many bad situations; I feel guilty thinking I was one of them, growing up. He forgives me. I’m relatively certain he’d do that regardless of how sorry I was.

Derse Heirs are therapists who need therapists. Careful on what would tip things too far or be too bold to say, Derse Heirs hold their tongues, believing recklessness breeds catastrophe. They’re good at what they do, but are the most prone to throw themselves too far into impossible goals with a martyr’s masochism - content only in chaos and toil, proving themselves through bleeding hands and broken spirit. Too often they fear their friendly face is a fraudulent facade, only a mask to their violent impulses and desire to control others, only held back through self-control. They’re calm because they believe the world needs them to be calm; beating the shit out of someone (who probably has it coming) violates their presentation, despite being a part of their most honest self. The explosive components of their personality are consciously recognized, and the proccess of holding themselves together so they can hold everyone else together is often internally mythologized. Much like Derse Witches before them, they’d like to believe your comfort is because they did you the mercy of lying to you; also like Derse Witches, there’s still alot of kindness that doesn’t fit their narrative of “manipulative tyrant”. If they walk away from it all, they’ll have reasons why they can’t go back, but it’s usually still reflecting someone trying to frame it for everyone else’s benefit and not “I don’t want to.” Getting them to open up with all their pain, phillosophy and politics is something you either do in a safe enviroment, or something they do alone - and it’ll always be messy.

Equius is...interestin’. Weird society, weird kid, and he knows that. Also, a kid - Derse Heirs seem to round out more as they go along. Would’ve been nice to see more of that. Poor guy. Top 5 characters, I swear.

I’ve got a very close friend who always had Heir traits; I never really understood how much goes through their heads until he gave me a shot with all this, and we dug deep into Equius’s psychology (“Inherit Nothing” is such a good song). It’s helped me see all this more clearly, and I hope you will too. Failing that, watch Steven Universe Future.

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A world in chaos, mired in misfortune, draped in darkness---

SERVANTS
(WARRIORS, ROADIES, SLAVES)

Seeing an aspect for what it is is one thing, but it's not going to be enough for everybody. Following the rules for the sake of itself can seem a waste - where's the tangible benefit? How hard do you have to work before the system pays off? Isn't this aspect supposed to be "good", not just "comfortable"? The Servants trade intuition for initiative, trying to **exploit** the immutable as far as it goes without colouring outside the lines...however, this struggle with the application often takes the definition for granted. Without a Prophet's eye, Servants often leave others to define their aspect for them, or fail to question their assumptions; yet, their rigid beliefs grounds them when all goes wrong, refusing to give up when they don't believe they're allowed a choice in the matter. Faith in a Kingdom is what makes them build it, and they'll damn well fight for it too.

PAGES are wistful dreamers, quick to apologize and quick to offer help to anyone around them. They're plagued by both crippling doubt and wild ambition, commonly exhibiting a stop-and-start confidence: charismatic promises, followed by imploding into a mess of apologies and self-flaggelation. They're attracted to romanticized stories of heroes and saviors, either emulating them (conditionally) or becoming attached to exciting people in their lives; despite this, they're often ashamed and self conscious of their interests, while being incapable of shutting up about it. Many remain punching bags who only function through escapism and living by proxy, but they can never truly ignore their desires; stubbornly opinionated behind their bashful exterior, Pages are on a long journey to untangle themselves and find the confidence to say everything they ever felt needed saying. This often means continually experimenting with their presentation, trying to find the right approach, ruleset, and knowledge to align their principles with a world they're tentative to confront. They may eventually find their confidence, embodying an impossible larger-than-life persona...or spend the rest of their lives living in the shadow of who they wish to be.

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Important disclosure: I am a Page.
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Mages and Pages are related to each other like T-Rexes and chickens: understandable, once you get past the insult. Both are weighed down by personal dogma, a lifestyle that must conform to conviction and respect limitation. Yet, where Mages take simple pleasures in a life of

neutrality, a Page has a taste for adventure in a world with something to lose...and they're *going* to lose (at least from the onset). The bar for success is steep, and the punishments are severe for both failure and shortcuts. Alongside this, a brighter spark still hasn't blotted out outside world; in fact, it only highlights how selfish, obtrusive, and fake these self-imposed delusions are. Thus, to the mirror and masses, good must be both performed and proven: Pages **exploit** their aspect, earning merit under a metric they infer but never infringe. While they do their best to be helpful, they're often tongue tied through holding friends and their problems by a personal ruleset - Pages do not serve people, they serve their gut. They automatically filter daydreams into obsessions, opinions into judgements, and childhood fantasies into standards of success. It should be no surprise then that Pages express such constant fragility on a day to day basis, overwhelmed by their own impossible, unfulfilled labours. They're always failures by their metric alone; assuming fault for things out of their control, alternating between trying to rise to that challenge and trying to escape. Still, Pages will always try to spread their ideas, never giving up on the potential - and so long as they do, even if they won't admit it, they haven't given up on themselves. Their aspect takes the form of imagined utopias, reassuring mantras, sanctified laws, sticking points, zeitgeist assessment, weird outbursts, and indulgences ranging from harmless escapism to superhero bravado.

I know my story. I know the Pages in Homestuck lean the same way. I'd probably get more out of real Pages if I could talk to them - too much resentment. I hate seeing who I was, and who I am when I'm thrown off-balance. Mages accept their aspect because they see it as their lot in life - at one point, it was, and now they just don't reach far enough. Pages...it should be no surprise Pages distance themselves from their own brain, blame themselves for wanting more. Someone pushed something on them - could be parents, or just something from society that kept their attention as a kid - and they rushed ahead to meet that standard before realizing how absolutely unqualified they were. Failure, handicaps, or simple inadequacy are not coincidences to the Pages; they appear to be a quintissential ingredient, *especially* as they pertain to their chosen aspect. You can't save the world when you're already living in an apocalypse. You can't be a free spirit when you're helplessly dependent on others. Can't slink off into nothing when you're a public aristocrat. Can't meet the world head on when you're too autistic to even belong in it.

And you can't stop thinking about it. Can't stop identifying with it. It's you. You're a failure in trying to be you. Why? What about the doubt, isn't that you too? Not in the way you want, where all your instincts keep clawing and screaming at you. So fuck you for wanting it; you must be greedy, you must be not good enough, someone else should be here in your place. Your name is wrong, your flesh is wrong, your fucking soul is wrong. You don't deserve to be yourself.

Next person who says Pages are a passive class gets a fucking boot up the ass.

Pages are always looking forward, and forging a confident persona to press through their doubts never stops being an objective...but even if they haven't noticed, the over-apologizing bundle of burden is *also* a manufactured persona. The impossible fantasy of their ideal self intimidates, enshrining everything under its shadow; compromises between raw passion and pragmatism blur both into a glassy artifice,

leaving Pages in a permanent state of theatre, believing and behaving according to what they think is “necessary”. Reality can become distorted to the point that Pages blot out competing narratives, and while they’ll flagellate themselves for failures (even ones other people attribute to them), they have a huge blind spot when *they* are the aggressor; what they failed *and* what they wanted are both sanctified in their mind first and foremost. Selfishness and slights get wrapped up with moralizing, where Pages can see themselves as the tragic victim who deserves sympathy, accommodation, or someone else’s girl (or whoever). Resenting this part of their brains is not the same as killing it, and it’s often in the midst of self-loathing Pages will cave to impulse; a lifetime of agony trying to win an impossible race, they think stealing the prize might be their only option. On the other hand, confidence does not guarantee anything genuine: Pages are prone to downplay their transgressions, smoothing everything over as necessary, negligible, inevitable, or justified - rotating these motives only highlights insincerity. Fact is, Pages like getting what they want, and making that sound like a good thing for everyone - but they’re still just as easily victims, tricked into thinking the core of their being needs to revolve around abusers. They’re natural manipulators who are still easily manipulated, depersonalized from everything but fantasy; every altruistic act or rallying cry is tainted by self-interest, desperate to drag their dreams close enough to finally reach.

I have problems. Most days, I have them under control, even if they never truly go away. I’ve had alot of people gaslight me over the years, and I know that makes me predisposed to mimic it on top of natural Page...schemey, worm bullshit. I don’t always know when it happens, but I’m better when I do, and better when I act in a way I won’t have to make excuses for it. You want a good media example of a Page going off the rails with hubris, look at Sam Raimi’s Spider-man 3. You want an example where the Page *stays* an asshole, go watch Gotham; I’m not specifying who without a lawyer.

That Witch of Space pal of mine brought up how often sexual conquests or obsessions make up Page thought. She’s on to something, but I wouldn’t call it a rule - there’s an asexual Page out there somewhere, I’m sure. It *is*, however, a good example of how reliably the Page brain hypes itself up into only doing what it wanted to do in the first place.

Prospit Pages are probably the first thing that popped into your head when I was describing all this. Innocent, well-meaning, polite, with only pristine visions of a world where nothing bad ever happens and everything works out for everyone. Still marred by poor self-esteem, they’re more *confused* anyone sees potential in them rather than anything else - which can make them slow to accept change, waiting on a miracle rather than being practical. They try to live in accordance with law and order, but also miss when that blurs with their own principles; they’re very difficult to reason with if they’ve been properly riled up, as rare as that is to happen. More often than not, they’re simply polite and lost in their own little world, wildly enthusiastic about their hobbies and interests to the point of

overwhelming people who listen. While they frequently apologize for rambling (or during it, if they can't stop themselves), these are all the hallmarks of a Page still holding themselves back. Could wind up something beautiful, but they'll only stop being so annoying after they stop mentioning it.

Homestuck's got plenty of Pages, and they're primarily Prospits; Tavros and Jake, sure (count Tavros for the only one who hit his potential permanently, and all by himself), but there's also a more buttermilk-sour example in Zebede from Friendsim. I gotta mention My Hero Academia with Deku, though anime is honestly full of them anywhere you look.

Just as whimpering but with the added attribute of *"wicked",* **Derse Pages** are pressure cookers ready to either make a diamond or crack one. They're guarded, stressed, wracked with self-loathing, and eternally aware of the bleak future of broken dreams that they seem cursed to follow; as such, they remain in a constant state of course correction. They're often erraticly anxious assistants, always at risk of falling into broken despondency, but flirting with "sick of your shit but still going to fix it" direct action the more they grow. Their self-awareness is often why they're so overwhelmed; resentful to their own compulsions and their lot in life, irritated at the irrationality of an innate "fault". They are more prone overall to manipulation or treachery, due to the fact that these are not breaks from their code entirely, but rather parts (not all) of the code itself - they tend to root for the bad guys, be it in media or news reports. Very aware of their dark thoughts, most Derse Pages try to stuff it down and "sanitize" themselves, which only makes for worse crimes when something snaps; if they don't make it heroic, it'll only ever be hedonistic. They can't ignore they have some strong opinions on morality, and that if the universe made any *goddamn sense* it would punish the guilty...but they're their first example of "guilty". They've gone too far before, and they will again, but what matters is not making the same mistakes twice. They truly do want to make the world beautiful, but they're willing to step over *alot* of people to get there - at least, far more than they're comfortable admitting.

Don't look at me like that.

Horuss - for as brief his appearances - hit close to home. Same for Xefros of Hiveswap fame (whose abusive best friend was...uncanny). Look, you ever see a moody little sadsack like Shinji from Evangelion and wanna shake him because you know he's underselling himself...I mean, you ever wonder where that stubborness is coming from? Pages only learn the lessons we want to learn, and we'll tough through any lecture with the pent-up resentment that we still haven't had our chance to speak. Maybe we blow it. Maybe we've got nothing good to say, and it's all as selfish as we keep loudly worrying it is. Just don't think the help we need is anything you can jam into us with enough force - we're the "most powerful class" for a reason.

Actually, you know who's a fantastic example? Chidi, of The Good Place; sure, he's got the whole journey down, but Kant's phillosophy feels the important takeaway. "Acting in accordance with what you want to be a universal law" and all that. It's not suggesting that never lying will stop lying, only that it can be personally fuffiling - and isn't believing in "universal laws of virtue" what Pages are all about?

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---Modest, honest, meager, eager---

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KNIGHTS are loyal, consistent, tough, and so compulsively humble they'll refuse to admit any of it. They naturally drift into becoming the fulcrum for friend groups (with slight favourites), handling tasks most would find monotonous or stifling. They share a Page's flair for self-depricating theatrics, but often meant more to playfully (or aggressively) annoy rather than endear. Whether it's casual socializing or dire situations, Knights specialize in bravado and persona - they do not show weakness, and do not bring down the mood with their own problems. While they frequently double down on their walls and defenses when pressed for honesty, they do have speeches ready for those moments; that this is their burden to bear, all they're allowed to be, so someone else can shine brighter...but, these are the lies of someone who isn't the main character of their own life. Cracks always appear eventually, as the Knight lifestyle is inherently unsustainable both from stress and idealized "standard" that never was. Selfless sacrifice is a great idea on paper, but respecting them for the struggle only distracts from the fact that they don't have to. Rules and restriction drive them forward, but limits their potential; they fight a battle they do not expect to win, but they absolutely *can* as soon as they believe they deserve to.

I swear Latula is the most functioning Knight, and most of that is just being REALLY GOOD at pretending everything's fine. Look, if this entry sounds harsh, it's that I don't want to romanticize hurting yourself so everyone else is okay - even if Knights do good, it should never be at the cost of their soul. They all think it has to.

"An idealized image of everyone else while personally failing to self-care" is a carry-over from Seers, but the higher stakes only highlight the issues; their lack of compromise, their insistence they know best for everyone, and prioritizing "pretty" pictures over actual improvement. Course, rather than just observe, they feel an obligation to get involved and apply elbow grease, while still seeing everything around them in terms of poetry. The same way that a Page's brain hypes their own casual desires into virtuous tasks, a Knight's brain tries to enshrine *everyone else's desires* as the Knight's duty to fulfill; just as soul-crushing, but they're not about to let anyone see them cry. This results in huge miscommunications and resentment because **Knights are not psychic, and frequently not emotionally honest enough to learn (LET ALONE GUESS) what their friends want,**

or how they want it done, if at all. A Knight speaks and demonstrates their aspect fine, but refuses to practice it in a way that benefits or glorifies them in paticular; with an ascetic focus on function, Knights **exploit** their aspect as a weapon - a hammer, in a world of too few nails. It's their take-it-or-leave-it problem solver, their code of honor, *your* utopia they build from their own blood, the ark to save you, the rules at their expense, the god they appease, the chain holding them down...and, often, it's the qualities they project onto other people, who somehow "deserve" it more.

Always similar parents. Have whatever happy conversation you want, they clam up when their folks are around - speak when spoken to, no acting out of line. Classpects are trained into us; no matter how bizarre or disconnected from reality a Knight's compulsions seem, they were law at some point in their lives before. It helped them survive. Once.

Knights can and will do alot of good, but they have to teach themselves how to do it without hurting themselves. It's hard for them to express affection as anything less than falling on their sword, and they'll have a hundred explanations for why the universe *somehow* requires them to suffer in order to function. Mind you, they're not always the victim; Knights can bring their pain with them, and struggle to force their surroundings into the battlefield they want to die in. It means seeing mundane friends as perfect hero leaders to follow with unquestioning devotion, helpless damsels to protected, and tyrants who oppress them. They'll get mad because suggestions or casual requests are *felt* as do-or-die commands, and the Knight wants validation for their toil - and in the worst cases, *payment*. Just as likely the Knight won't say anything, continuing to willingly volunteer at chores and busywork because it's their "secret burden". If the emotional toll wears them down, if people disappoint (or just confuse) them, if their framework *shatters*, most throw in the towel. They can sulk and say they failed, try to start over with more damage, or they can become hatefully bitter at the entire concept of goodwill - life is nothing but broken promises to them now. Knights will put you on a pedestal, and it's alarming how much temper and desperation they'll display if you try to leave...and how much they want *you* to be mad if *they* threaten to leave.

If we're being entirely honest, Dave Strider's mental breakdown could've been alot worse.

Prospit Knights are not, strictly speaking, "laid-back". They may pretend to be, or openly mention they'd prefer to, but their rules still have them in a vice. As inflexible as they are, they're the least likely to crack; they're content with their chosen level of stress, and their bluster or self-deprication never completely overtakes their ability to have a rational discussion. This does mean that while they're the least likely to consciously recognize they have problems, they are the most

likely to admit it - but again, not really looking for “solutions”. Letting someone else take the lead is very natural for them (to the point they may not want to admit it), but they’re not above backtalk and not immune to open disrespect, making them prone to a “backseat driver” kind of criticism. If they do snap, it’s not as sudden; you can often see the gears turning as they talk, liable to mention when they’re running out of patience for people (just not if you ask directly, then it’s “fine” again, because that’s the “correct” response). Letting all the rudeness out and deciding if they’re going to burn a few bridges (or all of them) is bound to happen eventually. It might be a half measure where they’re still unconsciously empathetic and respectful despite their words...and it might *not* be.

Karkat’s tricky - even Hussie admitted his lifestyle in a hostile and totalitarian world really warped his perceptions, making his personality a bit of a deviation. Still, one has to admit that he is clear about how he feels about any given situation - no one said “fucking pissed” isn’t a valid interpretation of Prospit honesty. Latula feels a more general example, and looking to media winds up with alot of *literal* sidekicks.

Derse Knights will die for you when the cards are down, but will do alot to make sure you wouldn’t expect them to. Their Knighthood is percieved in the grimmest lenses of suffering and sacrifice, as they are but a worthless wretch to be sacrificed and forgotten about - but this is rarely spoken out loud. In a good 95% of situations, Derse Knights are an inpenetrable wall of antagonistic jokes, deflections, and relentless “class clown” harassment. While this sadism often reflects legitimate irks and indignation, it also encourages the poor reputation they believe they deserve...or at least, it’s *supposed* to. Derse Knights struggle to find a goldilocks zone of abuse - given and taken - which either shoves away friends who show patience, or wears them down trying to co-exist with the truly cruel. While humor can soften some of these blows, it also makes distinguishing touchy subjects a guessing game; sullen bitterness or explosions of temper can seem random, while Derse Knights act like it should have been obvious where their lines were drawn. These harsh constraints and contradictions have no pleasant destinations on their own, and it’s unlikely for them to sustain relationships with people where they can peform their labour, avoid emotional honesty, and still function. If things get too “chummy”, they’re very likely to self-sabotage in dramatic ways, surgically trying to piss as many people off as possible, saying things that can’t be taken back and breaking things that can’t be repaired. There’s pride in there, sure, but they’re not hurting people because they’re “no good”: they’re hurting people because they’re terrified to be loved, and because their moral framework has no way to process them getting a hug. Of course there’s alternatives to this road, but it’s darkly seductive to burn bridges and solemnly march on to the next disaster.

You can point to this. Can point to Rocket Raccoon. Can point to Dave Strider. Fact is, Derse Knights are a bleeding little jack-in-the-boxes of disaster until they finally want to be anything else. I don't know precisely what they want to hear, but it's probably best they think of something themselves - they have enough orders. And I do get it.

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[blugh]

OUTLAWS

(REBELS, DOCTORS, CHEATS)

It takes a magic touch to bend the rules without leaving any mark, but desperation is it's own mistress. Twist a few rules, ignore the rest, but only enough for you and yours; to **steal** admits trespass, but who's to say the system doesn't have it coming? That principle can wait when people starve? That reform (perhaps not revolution, not yet) may need a touch of violence? "Greed" isn't really the driving force - it's "Envy". The world is simply full of too many nice things being doled out to those that don't appreciate it, and too many injusticies dealt to those that deserved better. Of course that's subjective, but it always will be - for these two, that might be enough.

THIEVES know exactly who they are and who they want to be...or at least, the impression of both of those things, which may not hold up to either scrutiny or setbacks. Sly and snarky, they're difficult to ignore by design; always fighting the tide, defining themselves by their deviations, their unique (or simply unappreciated) talents, and general disagreements. While bold as individuals, they are not truly independent: counterculture requires culture, and rebels require a status quo. Thieves are highly aware of their enviroment, expectations, and social dynamics, and may only find their voice when they find their audience. Crude and rude boasts of superiority are a cliche; however, while the schadenfreude of offending has it's delights, Thieves are always looking to *impress* far more (even if they haven't realized it yet). No matter how much they stress to be an outsider, they keep "coincidentally" crossing paths, inviting friends to nights of troublemaking and debauchery, or swearing some pretty serious pacts of blood-bonds. They're the team's fixer, the dark horse, the secret weapon...and yes, they really just want you to pay attention to them and never leave, even if they struggle to do it in a way that isn't at least a little rude. Honestly, they're just cats.

To their credit, Thieves are really positive people, with a fearless (if contextual) confidence they're almost justified in advertising. They upset the delicate balance of Witches by identifying *as* someone who

upsets delicate balances; just as much the free spirit with none of the discretion, a Thief **steals** their aspect in broad daylight. They're shrewd in justifiying loopholes, exceptions, special treatment, and often attaching their signature (and self-worth) to the socially risqué...or, straight up something they don't deserve, belongs to someone else, and they've misunderstood the subtleties of. Losing a Witch's modesty also highlights the mechanism: keep your hands busy, keep your eyes on the prize, do not slow down. Witches always bounce back, but Thieves are playing with higher stakes: lows that bleed the spirit, and highs they'll fight to preserve. A Thief's aspect is not their pride, but what holds it together; their art that the world isn't ready for, their secret technique (weirdly proud of cheating), their illicit romances, their spirit animal, their gold medal in a competition that's killing them (still weirdly proud of cheating), their insistant catchphrases, the niche they won't share, what they won't apologize for, and the molotov that keeps them warm in a cold, cold world.

NICHE. I'm gonna' say it again - **NICHE**. Vriska's reign of terror has become too embellished, and I can't help but feel she's being confused for a *very* different class at this point. Real Thieves (we can count Pre-Retcon Vriska) might get ahead of themselves and do damage, but there's limits, and being in the spotlight too long hurts their eyes even if they wanted to be there in the first place. That sense of unworthiness always kicks in and balances them out (eventually), and it's FUCKING WEIRD if you write a Thief without one - daddy issues, not a fucking god complex!

Let's not beat around the bush: Thieves are jerks. Sure, they might openly know this and embrace it, but they're guilty of far more than the occasional faux-pas. Impatience and sadism makes them consistently rude to strangers, and marginally better to friends until they feel slighted. They develop grudges too easily, only needing half a reason to swing and rarely thinking through potential fallout. A Witch may hinge too much on a concept of blamelessness, but a Thief finding comfort in *being* blamed is an unsustainable road; chronic obstinance can only be downplayed, excused, or "paid for" so many times, and Thieves tend to conclude these judgements without giving anyone else (i.e. the offended party) a say. What empowers them also binds them, as Thieves hold mistrust to gifts without a thrill of the chase, and instinctivly double-down when challenged - concerned friends and "society" blur together. Behind the bravado, they're hurting...but more hurt means more bravado, and sometimes the only way to prove superiority is to sabotage the competition. Thieves can be outright abusive in reinforcing weaknesses (often their opposed aspect, but any bullying will do), too keen to cite their own traumas while recreating it in others. Still, they can't ignore that this behavior doesn't actually make the pain go away, making them burn out on their own (eventually) even without a confrontation. Feeling misreable

is something they always do alone, and when the bravado breaks, that's all they've got.

Vriska did alot of wrong things. She didn't have to, and using predestination as an excuse is more proof she's a jerk. I'm somewhat miffed Homestuck's self-declared "most important character" is so often forgiven of being a murdering bootlicker because "she had a rough childhood", and "she did so much good too!". I can't keep track of when or if Hussie changed his mind about her, and I don't care - in real life, people like that rarely get the boon of ***saving the world*** to offset their relentless bullshit, and I still got arguments for Spider8itch anyways! I advocate humility here, not just being a "benevolent" asshole.

Prospit Thieves are likely to say that being an asshole is mostly okay so long as you have your reasons - and while they have plenty, they're often not very convincing. Sure, they have a clear sense of right and wrong, but will either have excuses for not doing the right thing or have some messed up methods to reach it. Their sense of being "cheated" by the world often goes unchecked: they are *always* the underdog, even if they've been on top for awhile. This lack of critical assessment leaves them chasing goals that distract more than repair, undertaking challenges often precisely because they're unqualified. While wounds are an open book to anyone who asks (but not up for criticism (or therapy)), it really doesn't seem to slow them down at all; trauma is reliable justification, like some kind of case-closed, "why are we still talking about this?" cause-and-effect. They're also frustratingly off the mark in confronting societal injustice; it's not that society must be uprooted for it's failures, but more that the system made a "mistake" in failing to accommodate their specific needs - they either want to be on top, or to get out. It's harder for them to reconcile the disparity between their callousness and dependencies, making them more prone to write off transgressions, swept under the rug - or cut their losses altogether. If this all sounds like mental framing and not flavour, it's because Prospit Thieves actually vary quite a bit in that regard: cheerfully obnoxious to ruthlessly competitive, spitfire hero to spiteful loner, high-class vanity to rugged punk. Much like Prospit Witches before them, Prospit Thieves distance themselves from what their mask is hiding, but the higher stakes mean disillusionment borders on mental breakdowns. Life just isn't as simple as they want it to be, but stubbornly living as though it is only shoots them in the foot.

Sometimes it's hard writing nice things about Thieves because I keep thinking about Vriska, but there's alot of "scoundrels with hearts of gold" both in fiction and in reality (I've known a few, but never that close). Understanding why they think what they do is important to challenge them - not that different from Witches, fittingly.

I have a few fiction suggestions, but I'm more nervous about these ones. I'm always worried I'm going to get one of these so wrong it just tanks my credibility.

Derse Thieves are likely to say that being an asshole is completely okay if you have comedic timing - and while they have plenty, they

also know better. Creatures of habit, they're unashamed of their worst qualities, insufferably proud of their best, and crystal clear in exactly half of what they want; the remaining half is far too embarassing, even if it doesn't really make that much sense why they think that. The good side of this self-awareness is that they have a much better sense how their pain affects them, how far is too far, and their capacity for harm...and the bad side is that their pain is harder to ignore, they're prone to cross lines cause they *can*, and they may find validation in open cruelty by embellishing their nature from "misanthropic" to "nefarious". While this does make them much more dangerous friends, it also softens them in a peculiar way: if they're gonna' be evil, someone else oughta' be good. It's easier for them to stay on the fringes of groups and not over-involve themselves, easier for them to proccess differences of opinon, and it's easier to see when their bad habits aren't even making *themselves* feel better. If they trust someone enough to open up, there is raw sincerity in taking every word to heart, even if it's harder still for them to truly change. They might be an asshole, but they'll happily be *your* asshole.

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ROGUES don't say much - either of substance, or at all. They're pretty easy to talk over, and may even encourage you to do so. They enjoy distractions, are pleasently social in sharing those distractions with people they like, and evasive (perhaps guilty) towards those they don't. They're awkward, but they aren't really looking for people to take care of them; more realistically, they're hoping to take care of others, even if they're not entirely sure how to ask or when it would be appropriate. On a surface level, they're isolated, and insistant that anyone else is more qualified to help. Know them a little, and they're reliable in loose advice, openly unsubstantiated and bordering on platitudes. Get to their inner circle, and they're fiercly protective; ironclad resolve, with a warm soul that will never morally allow you to be sad even if they have to fight you on it. The weight of these beliefs isn't something they'll brag about (or often recognize), and the moments extreme enough to make it all manifest run the risk of scaring them away altogether. It's hard enough to convince people they deserve happiness, and it's harder still to follow your own advice.

“The best Homestuck character is Roxy, or you’re wrong”

An Heir can reform laws all they want, but Rogues can’t wait for the law to catch up (if ever) when there’s good deeds that need doing; they **steal** their aspect on behalf of others, offering more daring solutions, more direct advice, and poaching/reclaiming what would’ve otherwise been wrapped up in tradition, beaurocracy, guilt, anxiety, etc. What matters is people (certainly their favourites) being happy, and Rogues excel at subverting and loosening the grip of ideological chains. Course, while they’re just about as steadfast as Heirs, they’re not nearly as stable; too often they hesitate, hold their tongues, avoid making promises, and are unlikely to invoke a miracle on command or in public. They’re as prone to rise to challenges and be there when people need them, but they keep at a reasonable distance if someone else has things covered, and flounder when overwhelmed by too many demands or for too long. Rogues require autonomy to do their best work, and being in the sidelines minimizes how many people and rules they have to argue with at one time; it’s a big acomplishment to be someone they speak freely with. Make no mistake, a Rogue’s aspect is not to be underestimated; it’s forgiveness to mistakes past and current, overdue happiness, stolen medicine, the simple pleasures that are easy to miss, a secret garden, a few white lies, a peace worth fighting for, an injustice to correct, and a piece of their soul crafted to fill a spot in yours.

Unsurprisingly, Rogues also seem to come from households like Heirs, where something was definately missing (or hugely mishandled) and hurting everyone.

Unlike Heirs, they couldn’t do anything about it.

Most of the damage a Rogue does are the result of what they didn’t do; the times they should’ve spoken up, the times they let people push them around, the harm from putting everyone else first. Making exceptions for every bleeding heart, Rogues can find themselves pulled in every direction at once, all while unsure of their own identity. Even with that in mind, it’s hard to ignore the potential dangers of a phillosophy with “My friends did nothing wrong and deserve the world” as a starting point. Wager too little, and Rogues acomplish nothing besides hugs and excuses; go too far, and all they do is fray friendships trying to know someone better than they know themselves. That middle ground to negotiate friends into reinvention is delicate, and all the good-intentions in the world can’t change that some people either aren’t ready to change or don’t want to. Rogues learn this hard, especially the times that trying to force something only made it worse…but they seem to have the most shame for times their friends truly *did* put all their trust in them, and reality simply failed to budge, or was complicated enough to intimidate. Guilty Rogues invoke their aspect to weaken faith in their own words,

further isolate from the people around them, break commitments they shouldn't, and otherwise blot out the hostilities and complexities of the real world...which is tragic, from someone with a gift in meeting those dangers head on.

You can lose a Rogue before they actually leave. Almost never a blowup, but, if you take them for granted for too long, if you offer too little back, their heart stops being in it even if their hands are still helping. They're not used to voicing their own thoughts, obviously, but they don't have to; most of the time, they just stop showing up someday. If they do talk to someone about it, it's clear they already made their mind up.

Prospit Rogues aren't looking for trouble, but will try to fix what they don't overlook. They're overtly shy, but have an underlying confidence they don't seem to notice. The very definition of passive, they frequently are completely blindsided by their own impulses, doing their job almost entirely on instinct and consistently failing to recognize what was so special about it. They'll routinely insist there's someone better who could help or weave words, to the point that they might stumble into a great solution to a problem only because they weren't directly asked to give one. Their casual chumminess is weighed down by consistent self-deprication, a lack of guile hiding it failing to change their resolution they can live with it. The closer you get, the more likely they are to say you backed the wrong horse, or clam up entirely at compliments, but it's *still* underselling themselves; sure, they'll follow people who ask for help (within reason), but it's really *vibing* with do-or-die moments that kick them into high-gear that give them form as a motherfucking *rebel*. Just as well, they can be pretty blunt when someone's exceeded their patience and crossed a line - not cruel, really, just firm. Prospit Rogues might never crack, but they're more than (perhaps even <u>not</u>) easy-going. If they don't know what they'll stand against, they're never going to figure out what they stand for - even if it's staring them in the face.

I know 4 Prospit Rogues personally. This is the most unbiased and immediate entry I can write and it's of the people who know themselves the LEAST! Ah well. You know Rufioh (Homestuck Rufioh, not...not Hook-Rufioh, obviously) is probably not a good role model for cheating on his girlfriend, but he's still so damn charming you almost forget. I'd peg Skylla from friendsim as one, with the benefit of hindsight.

Derse Rogues are ready for trouble, staying vigilant to what others might overlook. They're hardly shy, but they struggle with confidence in a way they don't want others to notice. Noticably, they lack the Derse Heir staple of sporadic yet intense violence on their fellow man (I cannot stress this enough: PROBABLY had it coming). They definately think about it, either as a joke suggestion or personal grumbling, but *almost* always their resentments are vented at a safe distance or in a safe environment. More than a little self-loathing reinforces their barriers and deflections, resulting in advice through a filter while the rest of it (and them) holds back...and yet, they're so much more diligent in what they do, both less likely to turn people

away and less likely to give up. They've got a public service to perform, and it's free for the only people that mattered in the first place. Of course, while they only need a few pushes to talk back to jerks, it's pulling teeth to get them to set boundries with their loved ones - if *they* don't, who will? It's not an ego thing, but Derse Rogues are likely to think people in a rut will stay in that rut unless they personally intervene. To this end, they frequently fail to notice the toll it takes on their own mental health, and make excuses for some clearly sketchy people when they *really* shouldn't - or, more accurately, don't have to. Jokes and appeasment aren't their best quality, let alone their *limit*: it's looking someone directly in the eyes and slapping them in the face for being so cruel to themselves - let alone anyone else.

Nepeta deserved better, I'll fucking cut anyone who says otherwise.

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FAE

(ZEALOTS, INNOVATORS, AUTOMATONS)

Serving an aspect has limits - not as much as just "knowing" the damn thing, but *still*. Trying to colour inside the lines of your own imagination can sound silly, when more faith inspires more dedication to push through problems that previously seemed insurmountable; to **create** beliefs where there was no precedent (or permission), heart pumping red hot with blood wrought from a stone. While this improvisation might suggest autonomy, it isn't (except it is): Fae are bound tighter to their aspect, which has always been less "Infallible divine platonic ideal" and more "memetic paintjob over hunches and superstition". They're problem solvers, but beating what *seemed* impossible sorta proves it wasn't in the first place, don't it? When **exploiting** is a background proccess, it becomes as imprecise as Servants are to **knowing**; without taking stock of all the options available, without even knowing what they're *talking* about, the Fae charge forward with a reckless charisma. "More" doesn't always mean "better"...at least, not as it pertains to mere *human* sensibilites,

Kinda stumped on words, personally. I mean Hussie went with "european medieval", but it is fun (and sometimes, beneficial) to translate that into other cultures and work through the platonic ideals of it all. I mean his symbolism was all manner of "mystical creatures"; elves, fairies (godmothers too), but you could stretch that to general spirits, demons, or even youkai if you're feeling weeb-y. In the most modern context, I guess "Cryptid" lands right, and it's already a pretty natural bracket to sort these individuals into.

MAIDS are intimidating, relentless, and the *very archetypal definition* of a workaholic. Their natural state is to juggle twice as many plates as anyone would think is reasonable, and then continue to up their ante if they think they can get away with it. Their identity is tied to their track record, always chasing the next opportunity to make themselves useful as a sacchrine bulldozer. While this is a somewhat volitile sense of self-importance, the focus is on service and not glory: sparing acknowledgment and affirmation is all they need, even if that might be the only thread keeping them reliable and not narcassistic. Of course, this is intertwined with a doubt in others competency, leaving Maids to push past their own friends in the name of doing everything themselves - even socially, there is a casual cruelty in their low expectations. Maids always have a plan; if they don't, they make one; if you give them one, they fix it; if you fight them, they do what they wanted to do anyways. They'll readily (which is to say impatiently) remind you they don't need cooperation for getting everyone's lives in order, and alot of the time that isn't an insult, but just a set of strange standards. They're aware the workload they've taken on is unfair, because they know asking other people for help in what they're building would be unreasonable. They might like company and hope everyone benefits, but they still work alone. Both a blessing and a curse, Maids are incapable of slowing down when they get going - and that's when, not if.

If you're thinking about career women in movies who end the film giving up on that promotion so they can spend more time with their kids or go on a vacation, you can skip this entry entirely because you already understand who I'm talking about.

Maids are generous and probably(?) incorruptible, but the way they help people is based on principles and assumptions left unchecked. They're bound to the same gut-morality as Pages, with a brain hyped up on representing virtue *but* with 80% less doubt and unworthiness. What takes Pages years to carefully muster the courage to attempt, Maids chase without hesitation; the idealized image of "who they're supposed to be" is maintained more often than not, but the risk of slipping and falling into existential ennui keeps them permanently pushing to secure this high. Maids edge on the brink of solipsism without falling in, open to new ideas and suggestions *just enough* to argue with it. It's not going to be a *fair* argument, but it gives them the bare minimum of self-awareness to navigate reality and break the limits of what some idiot thought was possible. Trusting in more than they see, a Maid **creates** their aspect; they power through protest, "correcting" the world into the utopia they already expected to be there. More than confidence, the nature of *what* a Maid is creating differentiates them from Pages: over-saturated and singular, bold statements and rash action, negotiation unnecessary, harmony overrated. A Maid is the living embodiement of their aspect; it's their

blood, their flesh, their doctorine, their only acceptable results, their true north, their reserves of gumption, their most harmful compulsions, their wildest stabs in the dark, the follow-up stab to make sure even after you screamed “don’t stab me”, and the fantasies they breathe as facts that either are or *goddamn should be*.

This is a wild concept, but if you put unimaginable amounts of pressure on a child and only validate them when they “succeed”, you’re likely to get a Maid...or, you know, a Page, and there does seem to be that AFAB/AMAB split. It’s pretty depressing; living as yourself, for someone else. It’s hard to take the reigns back of your life, even when all you do is pull the cart. The thing is, if you don’t also realize how heavy it is, you’re less likely to protest...

The lack of cowardice is an improvement from Pages, the lack of teamwork more questionable, but it’s the lack of *hesitation* that is the problem. Without the guilt and disassociation/rejection, Maids not only fail to notice when their instincts have pushed them to a bad idea, but may not actually *care*; in ignoring compromise or intervention from the very people they’re supposedly helping, they loop back around to the selfless arrogance of Mages. Looking for answers in a bubble, they can turn conspiratorial, impulsively accusing others (or, more frequently, themselves) on weak threads. This is to say nothing of being able to romanticize and justify intricate plans of revenge and humiliation, intertwining universal principle and personal spite within moments. They can be slowed down and brought to the drawing board, but you have to have their *utmost* respect to do so, and there’s still no guarantee they’ll stay. Beyond diplomatic hiccups, eternally plagued by the mantra “If you want something done right, do it yourself” is as taxing as it sounds. While stuffing down weakness for potentially *years* is all very impressive, breakdowns are inevitable, followed by a resolve that this is their mess to clean up. Look, Maids “overwrite reality” and “push past the limits of what’s possible” as metaphors - in truth, they’re just human beings. They’re not literally maids (usually), and not literally powerful magic creatures either (...*usually*). Maids do know who they are if they slow down, they do *get* there’s a world outside this idea of “who they have to be”, but it’s confusing compared to their comforts - a job well done is a dopamine hit, after all. They work alone, and they do indeed work wonders, but they don’t have to live for their work. Most Maids accept only half of this advice, claiming to have recovered from a spiral and feel totally refreshed; it’s up to the friends around them to insist they need a month’s vacation, and not a weekend.

“Had to be me; someone else might’ve gotten it wrong.” It’s a good line for Mages, Pages, Maids, and the last rung on the ladder we’ll get to. I think Maids truly do encapsulate the purity of that belief more than anyone else, but that doesn’t mean its right; they highlight the strengths and limitations both, and are so stable they live with it.

Prospit Maids are ruled by the singular law that they can do anything they put their minds to. Cheery and upbeat, able to conquer

any challange with a smile - or at least, utterly convinced they *should*. They set out to be perfect workers, supportive friends, interesting hobbyists, and ideal citizens. While well-mannered or even sweet, they're still impatient and competitive with others; differences of opinion or plans going off-the-rails often finds them confused that was even a possibility, leaving them doubling-down with failure not being an option. This forward-momentum ultimately obscures their own moments of selfishness, and an inarguable brick wall is very likely to cause them to crack. Even then, keeping that smile on will mean pulling a few excuses out of their ass, and they don't have to be good ones if they only have to convince themselves. Prospit Maids are generally slow to realize how different of a wavelength they're on, but the lessons they learn is usually "trust people less, trust myself more". They have uncanny talent in their chosen career path, but being "less-than-perfect" and being "a failure" are too often treated as the same thing - definately still Pagey, but they haven't got time to weep when they can bleed.

I understand the *idea* of having Jane go evil tyrant, but I still feel like I missed something there. Or, they did.

Derse Maids are ruled by the singular law that human beings will dissapoint them. They're far more objective focused, always keeping politeness and mental health as tertiary priorities compared to their career or art; if you don't agree with it, or think it's a waste of their talent, they'll do it *more*. This diligence surprisingly seems spurned by their increased self-awareness, where the most natural response to recognition is to resign themselves to ruin - a lifetime of pushing boulders up hills, where a slip means being squished. Mind you, this is rarely any kind of acrimony; Derse Maids are very content - even unsettlingly cheery - so long as no one fucks with their groove. With a good sense of humor and (negotiable) proffesionalism, it can be unexpected when they display true ruthlessness or a masochistic delight in thrill-seeking - there's violence in there, never entirely a joke. It's difficult to tell where the lines are and when they've already been crossed, meaning they'll probably only voice their truest frustrations at you all at once, unexpectedly, possibly minutes after (or even *before*) trying to fix your problem. When they finally burn out, there's a strong pull to keep going anyways, gleefully indignant to the stakes (and concerned friends). They've got the strength to move mountains, just not the constitution to do it forever - certainly not alone.

One of my best friends in the world. Sometimes, she gets pissed off and doesn't speak to me for a couple months. I accept it, and so does she.

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SYLPHS live for other people - they're unyieldingly optimistic, supportive to a fault, and treat "friendship" as a professional and formal contract. Productive and altruistic in equal measure, Sylphs preach black and white (mostly white) universal morality, always with an explanation or accomodation for when it contrasts reality. While more than a little snippy to slights, their default worldview is so gosh darned optimistic that they'll have a smile plastered on their face a majority of the time regardless. Despite this high energy, most remain on the backline, alternating between proxy enthusiasm or putting the "passive" back in "passive-aggressive". Don't get me wrong, they're duty bound to provide some insane support that would be unthinkable to outright ask someone, but Sylphs get carried away far too easily; terrible with boundaries, personal space, and anything less than a hard "no". One shouldn't be reckless in encouraging them to get out of the bleachers or to take their wildest ideas at face value; not until they find a way to reconcile an alarming amount of personal uncertainty with who they are, and what will make them happy. Sylphs are the lynchpins in any friend group - or only convinced they are, and dangerous in what they've decided that entails.

"I don't feel like I can be friends with someone without helping them."

Sylphs live for other people - or rather, tend to believe that, despite being a sentient human with wants and needs. The currents of their aspect are strong enough that there is a temptation to believe it will harmonize the world no matter what...but they're *just barely* not fully convinced it'll happen without them reminding everyone and staying on guard. Sylphs over-involve themselves even more than Knights, but pull the same trick as Page-Maid in being able to **create** ways out of fail-states; fudge the numbers, never say die, and rewrite the rules whenever they get in *anyone's* way. While this adaptability makes them less obviously (or, outwardly) contentious then Knights, they aren't actually adapting their aspect; failure is not an option, and if their friends aren't "succeeding" (**A VERY SUBJECTIVE CONCEPT)**, then something *must* be wrong with the script. This makes Sylphs hardwired to brainstorm solutions to problems that never looked like they had solutions, but terrible at noticing when only they decided it was a problem. Their aspect is their service to humanity, their contractual obligations, the life calender they plan for everyone else, their most passionate lectures, the fun ways they'd "upgrade" their friends, and the ways they nurture others in a way

they want to be appreciated...even though they're shy, or defensive towards the idea of (explicit) reciprocation.

My mother is in her 60's, and has been loud (very, very loud) about the wonders therapy has done for her; apparently, up until now, she hasn't realized how traumatic her childhood actually was, despite the facts remaining "constant screaming and beatings". I asked a Sylph I know (a very close friend, mind you) what their childhood was like. They responded, in complete sincerity, with an uneasy "I don't know".

I'm a bit concerned.

Sylphs live for other people - and sometimes, that means pinching someone's cheek and hijacking their life completely. Their dopamine rush is locked behind people saying "This isn't actually a big deal" or "I didn't ask for help", and Sylphs will often *fight you* to get that hit. With more stable smiles and more contentment in their (percieved) marginalized place in the universe, Sylphs lack the reliable explosions Knights exhibit - but when they *do*, they're playing with twice the gunpowder. Every problem a Sylph percieves is their responsability, and their creative optimism means anyone not accepting their encouragement must just hate being happy. Sylphs grumble more than Knights, but don't "snap" the same way - they don't burn bridges to isolate, they burn bridges to trap you with them. The helper instinct never stops, and the idea there's just the *tiniest* motive of pride, resentment, or helplessness seems difficult for them to notice; depression and desperation are old friends, always something under control, always something they could work around. Remember that this is a brain that's decided it's their job to have all the answers, and failing that job isn't the problem: the problem is that they don't know who they are if they *don't*, especially since acting out like this is usually spurned by sharp setbacks, humiliation, wakeup calls, and other bad news. The world is always so close to perfect in their eyes, but closing that gap is impossible - and not going to fix what's twisted up anyways.

Prospit Sylphs have the most stability in being a good friend and generous provider. They support everyone, give lots of second chances when they shouldn't, and only ask that everyone is civil. If they do overstep, however, they also have the biggest blindspot: "do right for right's sake", sure, but they can't *stop* doing right. Sometimes they'll toil making gifts or gestures for people who either don't want it (or didn't appreciate it the "correct way"), and sometimes they just can't let go of their particular status quo. They simply don't moderate their expectations, and the world will dissapoint. At worst, they'll frame selfishness as the assumed world order, trying to push people to be only the hyper-exaggerated image in their head, cruel at anything they interpret as "unpleasent", and failing to understand how authoritive they've become - the fact that

they’re arguing against their friend’s actual words doesn’t seem to register. Don’t let this distract from the fact that they will acomplish alot of good by not giving up on people and trying to help them succeed...they just shouldn’t be *complacent* in that, and assume that any good (or harm) they do is cosmically permitted - let alone ordained.

Hi mom.

Derse Sylphs intertwine “I’ll die for my friends :)” and “I’ll cut anyone who fucks with me :)” in the same phillosophy, and ocassionally in the same sentence. They’re exactly as aggressively helpful as any Sylph, but no stranger to the “aggression” part; if the world needs omlettes, that means no hesitation in breaking eggs. Unfortunately, given that eggs are people, they run into the familiar Derse issue where being aware of your problems is not the same as fixing them. Stern, stressed, and aware of their pride, this breed of Sylph is still capable of presenting as the backline beck-and-call in a way that’s hard to differentiate from Prospits; they’re a touch more openly self-depricating, and a few notches more fond of sassy zingers. They truly differentiate themselves when they get invested in a project, thriving on forward momentum with a touch of chaos; at home in the eye of the storm, but with an outside impression of “crazy mad scientist”. While twice as venemous in insults, Derse Sylphs are more outwardly uncomfortable with total authority, unlikely to assume and prone to cracking when “left in charge”. The contrasts of helpless sychophant, proxy parasite, over-protective parent, and wild god-complex are plainly visible even to them, and it’s all as terrifying as it is exciting. They’re the most in need of encouragement to get out there and strut their stuff, but it’s still important to make sure they don’t get in too much trouble.

I always felt Pearl from Steven Universe was a fair example. She might be infamously “salty”, but her devotion and belief is genuine, as much a boon as it is a bond. Creature of habit, and likely Hopebound. On that note, I actually met a Derse Sylph of Hope once. It...it went poorly.

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ROYALS

(JUDGES, SKEPTICS, SPOILSPORTS)

You keep pushing and pulling, something just might snap. Even if you want to steal it, you can’t admit it - or won’t notice, in all the upheavel. It all gets caught up in words and misdirection, because these two revel in complications. Their aspect is brittle, and corrosive

to what's around it; whether they want to or not, they will end up **destroying** it, and destroy far more with what they *don't*. What values it has must survive doubt and dissection, and anything left (or hidden) will be valued over anything else. We have upped the stakes from rebels resisting society, to society resisting the mystical unknown. Neither was ever going to win, but it is the politics and power of royalty that drag everyone else into their fight - their burden is to know what's best for you.

Look, they're not write-offs, but they've got some really unhealthy compulsions that they don't know how to turn off, and there's going to be no way to help them through it without being harsh - even moreso than this document has been before. Even if they turn up their nose and pride themselves on being unconvinced, of refusing to admit their own reputation represented, they're gonna look pretty stupid when it's obvious to everyone around them...and hey, smartypants, you don't *actually* think your opinion is the only one that matters, do you?

Buckle up.

PRINCES **(or princesses)** are…*complicated*. Most would likely describe themselves as "shy", or "people-pleasers" on the inside, but that can be a stark contrast to what they actually *do*. Princes take charge readily, confront what they see as injustice, make their moral disagreements well known, and struggle to articulate and live by a perfect phillosophy. Even if they're reluctant to reach out, they pride themselves on being there for the people they care about - but "pride" is the operative word. High personal standards and good intentions can blur into dangerous compromises, and a slew of rationalizations to avoid apologies. It is disengenous to say Princes aren't ones to look out for, despite a capability to be loyal friends and strategists. They frequently reinvent themselves, constructing a persona, reputation, and guidelines that ensure they are both the resident advisor and some definition of "cool"; however, doubt and self-loathing will decompose this mask, making them an emotional burden with increasingly erratic and drastic decisions. At the breaking point, another baptism; not so much an apology as a "don't worry", a new "clean slate", and perhaps a new address or social circle…yet, no matter how segmented a Prince's life looks, they really don't change much. They're just defensive dorks who try to pretend they don't care, while rationalizing the bitter isolation their constant complaining earns them as "the price of being smart". Again, Princes are complicated, but the real problem is that they keep trying to make everything around them equally complicated - especially when it isn't.

I might still have a few Princes here. It's unlikely, but, maybe you think "Hey this is starting to sound like me, though it's harsh". You're probably about to be pissed at the stuff I say next though, so, I guess most of this is for other people going "pff, yeah this is totally steve" and I'm sorry Steve but it's a fact of life that Princes hate being called Princes. It sounds like a catch-22, but that's only if you value your

opinion more than everyone else you know...which you might try to justify one way or another here. Something to work on, right? Maybe? Come on Steve, work with me.

Princes do not take well to other people trying to “sum them up” - which is a great way to sum them up. While they (usually) avoid the caustic swagger of Thieves, the fundementals remain: chipped shoulders, self-reliance, eager-to-please yet reluctant-to-trust. The ideals of a Thief become high enough that openly self-serving behavior becomes difficult to justify to themselves as much as others; the whole aspect feels “off”, and trying to find their place within it can take a lifetime. It is not enough to be a fixer or an “in-the-know” showoff, but these higher ambitions and expectations don’t lead to motivation as often as they lead to defeatist misanthropy. In the case of the former, a Prince **destroys** *through* their aspect, as a revolutionary iconoclast boldly proclaiming their ideas “THAT THE *MEDIA* WON’T TELL YOU ABOUT”. In the case of the latter (much more common), a Prince **destroys** the aspect itself, trying to deromanticize its allure and disentangle it from their identity. This obsession with having all the answers of How Things Should Be Done has numerous cracks, most of which stem from still being Thieves^2: Princes are inherently contrarians, thriving on (and/or paranoid of) persecution, with their truest passions (and motive) still buried in the aspect they keep loudly complaining about. The real thing that’s gotten dangerous is how complex their rationalizations get, and alot of that is just because complete transparency makes them awkward. A Prince’s aspect is an academia that vexes them, the contraband they relieve you of, an endangered beauty, a fragile peace, an embarrassing hope, the lover that rejected them, a sickness they recklessly amputate, a nightmare no one else shares, a crown of thorns, and what defines them in a way they’ll never admit.

Dirk Strider literally “raised himself”, which is kind of amusing to imagine for an infant in an isolated apartment. However, it *is* apt in how Princes describe their upbringings, which resemble far more the hostility Eridan experienced. Usually. Like a good 80% of the time. If not parents, I do know a Prince (who’s always been rather well adjusted) who says he adopted this way of thinking purely through his own autonomy. It’s odd to think about, and I know they get all futzy when they get examined, but damn if there’s not something TO all this...

The unfortunate truth is, Princes can do an alarming amount of damage to the people around them despite good intentions - an impulse to find problems will, when overextended, create them. They can be too involved in other’s affairs while being unsolicited or simply unsuited, and not notice their overprotective nature creating unhealthy power dynamics. Without being able to own up to their spite like Thieves, Princes often belittle and undermine others alongside (or in lieu of) supportive concern, unconsciously(?) gravitating to those that endure it. They are often confrontational and argumentative, protective of their dignity often as much *if not more*

than their friends - and often, *to* those friends. Provide enough pressure and they often default to a familiar argument of “Everyone is twisting my words, out to get me!”. The worse this gets, the more likely Princes will start rejecting their aspect wholesale as a corrupting influence that only they can see through; conveniently (and hypocritically), the sum of this often results in an interpretation of their values that *only* benefits themselves. Abuse and manipulation at this point is rationalized as an immutable fact of their nature or life; trying to console them rarely reaps results, as does reprimending them that the damage they’ve done is *still somehow worse than what they’re willing to admit*. Beyond the speeches, there’s just someone who cracked trying to do everything themselves, and felt stupid for trying in the first place. It is difficult to negotiate with someone who may prefer to turn their life into a trainwreck rather than accept a hug.

“And now I feel my calling is to break apart and fall to pieces; better yet, invent a brand new method of ascension.”

“So here I am, respectfully and royally destroying any chance of getting back on your good [graces].”

“So what? Did you want me to say sorry?
Should I apologize when you ignore me?
Didn’t ask to be right or to be lonely.
Or to be hatched into an ugly story.”

- “Ugly Story” by PhemieC, 2013 (i think)

Prospit Princes are peacekeepers, but only to their definition of “peace”. They cultivate a reputation for being sturdy, loyal, and trustworthy, while not shy about particular merits they’ve earned or skills they’ve practiced. The creation of their phillosophy and rules to life is slow, cautious, and deliberate - the execution and extolling however, is casual, even reckless. They’re emotionally transparent, and trying to look confident is an act of politeness and not deception. This transparency extends to what they take issue with; Prospit Princes do not hesitate to speak their mind on moral disagreements, (perceived) offences to them or those around them, or just general “bad vibes”. They’re matter-of-fact in having exhausted their aspect of all remaining value, but that’s often alarmingly little, and pushing them to try again (or doing it better yourself) hits their biggest sore spot. They’re frequently blindsided by how intense and overprotective they come off, but mistrust alternatives to their instincts. If people reject their oversight, they’re likely to assume that’s someone else’s fault for “not getting it”, and these arguments can make them more hassle than help. There is an implicit (or explicit) expectation of respect for protections past and present, quick to blame others while priding themselves on being the first to forgive. These schisms of perception can be mended, to learn both what their friends want and

what *they* want...or, devolve into an echo chamber of bitterness and sacrifice, while the Prospit Prince learns who will or won't prove "unreasonable". The worst of their manipulations and distorted reality are guided by "intuition"; if a Prospit Prince truly has abandoned their principles, they are the last to know, and the very last to admit it.

I had a long, long history with a certain friend. He always called it a "scientist impulse", which was as wrong as when Eridan did it. Everybody's big brother - and he'll snarl at you if you contest it. His behavior is perfectly encapsulated in characters of Homestuck's extended material, to the usual eerie degree these things are...I doubt he'd be happy about that. Doubt he'd accept it. All I can really do is prove his defenses unnecessary, and see where things go from there. At least others can recognize it.

Zebruh, pretty sure. Cole Phelps, maybe. Chuck McGill, 100%.

Derse Princes are the most delibrately obfuscative people you'll ever meet: an eternal engine of disparate reinvention and self-sabotage, masked by any number of excuses besides the somewhat obvious truth - insecurity. They reliably "start" as teenage supervillains with too much to prove (and transparently high opinions of themselves). This evolves into a superposition of shifting masks: eager and loyal friends with surprising honesty about their fears, burdened protectors making the hard decisions, suave yet casual charmers looking to do good without straining themselves, sarcastic sadists happy to dissapoint others with "how the world really works", or a martyring "born-broken" monster who ruins everything and everyone around them. While Prospits dip into all these pools, it's Derse Princes who lose sight of their own truth and extend past their own limits; too cruel to loved ones, they crack into devotion begging requital; too desperate to prove their "magnificent" individuality, they crack into a helpless "victim of circumstance" begging forgiveness. Among all these things, they are *still* their aspect despite themselves, often preferring to preach "nihilistic freedom" rather than the passions they find too embarassing to dare admit. Of course, that "freedom" pits them against everything and everyone around them, too obvious in what they're scared to lose. While many stay on the sidelines (and may prefer it that way), even contextual authority tempts the worst: an aura of smug superiority that never truly hides the desperate hysteria, trying to frantically overwhelm competing voices with personal attacks and gross humiliation. It can only fall back as "constructive criticism" so many times, and falling back further to "I'm actually the victim" should **never** forgive abuse. Ultimately, this "tragic and failed protector" is one more mask from someone who doesn't want to be hurt anymore...but it is the hardest to take off.

I am nothing close to unbiased on this one. I've known some eggs.

It's funny how much the "tortured genius, too smart to be happy" archetype gets passed around. Cause like, they're almost all Derse Princes, but it's a very specific instance that doesn't reflect the whole. You can look at Dr. House and Rick Sanchez and go "Hope and Life", but they're still exagerrated in how far they go and how much the world

facilitates their paticular egos. It’s Bojack Horseman that stands out to me, because the swath of flashbacks, progression, regression, small moments, big moments, conclusions by himself and by the people around him, that’s like the ENTIRE JOURNEY of a Derse Prince (of Light, specifically). Frankly if you watch the whole show, it’s a better crash course than I could ever do.

That, or the Pesterquest Dirk Strider route. Hearing nervous “definately a knight of heart shut up” young Dirk interact next to “looks like he would have a mental breakdown if he lost an argument” bad-timeline adult Dirk is a good display of how even Homestuck’s own definition of Prince accounts for the spectrum of reinvention - despite it always, eventually, boiling down to the same question:

>Trust your friends

>Trust yourself

- - -

Complicated compromises, juxtaposed fragments; politician and paragon, penultimate in parallel. Heartfelt pleas and heroic battles, transcribed by the masses as lectures and posturing from the would-be, the runner-up, the “almost” all-you-want-to-be. Prisoner to silk and satin, suffering from success, misunderstood misanthrope, no one can see you eye to eye; you watch over the people you love, and they feel looked down upon. You can’t settle, you won’t; you won’t let anyone. Sole skeptic to superstition, you scrutinize and subdue sorcery; smelt it down and sift through the slag to see what survives. Science called sin or just superfluous, the ignorant and illiterate iterate - it irritates. A Prince owes his people, and all interrogations of the imperial inquisition that make war to folklore are necessary - yet, flirting with demotion, to be disavowed by dissent. Why then? The motive? Protection by the wary? No, more simple; beneath spite and sneer is the spurned and scarred, unable to trust what could not be tamed, seeking some veneer of victory in vindictive violence while welding and wielding weapons of all viscera violated. An usurper, so be it, it’s what they always expected - or just you? All that initiative, no imagination; who are you besides your birthright and burden? A Destroyer, only? To your hundred excuses, one retort: “***can’t,*** or ***won’t****?*” You could be a good man, so long as you stop trying to be the greatest. You could be a heroic savior, if you stopped worrying who will notice. You could be a good King, but only when you stop wanting it, let alone thinking you ever had to be.

Don’t break the world, break the cycle; conquer yourself.

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BARDS fancy themselves phillosophers, threading a paradoxical needle between not being as smart as they think they are, and still being smarter than they let on. There’s an oft-spoken pride in being a

free spirit and thinker, which mirrors the contrarian authority of Princes. However, rather than insecurity, it's oversecurity: Bards are lackadasical skeptics, refuting expectations and obligations (especially those placed upon them) so that the good times can roll. They are surprisingly diligent at certain careers, skills, or hobbies, but you can't really ask them for *practical* help; they'll catch you only after they spent 20 minutes deciding you are, indeed, falling. Bards always prefer the merits of collectively discussing underdeveloped visions of revolution, complaining about weirdly specific inconviniences, and waiting for whatever vague set of circumstances they claim would warrent going through with any of this. On rare occasions, Bards will actually follow through; they'll lead group efforts, buy expensive gifts, say something truly profound, or scream that the injustices of the world have gone on too long and it is now time for a new age...which doesn't (usually) go anywhere. Bards are known less for these extremes, and more their loose therapy, with a detachment to issues that lets them approach things calmer and more careful than those too invested, finding useful perspectives from unexpected and untapped places. Bards love being underestimated, and can be disarming despite themselves, ready to engineer (or blindly take credit) for the realizations you never expected to have. These revelations are what a Bard lives for, because their comedy, easygoing nature, and distractability aren't distraction from their intelligence: they're the method of it.

If you're thinking of the common "wise stoner" archetype, you're on point. Bards act like that sober however, despite their propensity to seek out substances. To that end, there aren't alot of fictional examples in starring roles, but there's still an explored nuance in takes like Uncle from Red Dead Redemption (mostly the second one). The only time I've seen one as an honest-to-god protagonist I'd say is Spike from Cowboy Bebop (though I've argued with a friend on that one, and he might be right). Maybe it's the Time aspect that keeps him active, but I'll still blindly hold him as an ideal for what Bards COULD be if they put their money where their mouth is.

Bards might love their mystique, but they really are just Rogues^2. Disagreeing with the lifestyles of others is done without hesitation, downplaying ones sincerity with levity evolves into outright clownmanship, and difficulty articulating oneself turns into reveling in misdirection. Sure, there's bashfulness and appeals to alternatives, but Bards ramble under pressure instead of retreat, and these insistant pushes on sensitive topics come off as less "heartfelt imploring" and more "arrogant curiosity" (even though there *is* always compassion at its root). The crisis-response impulse is in there, but where a Rogue flirts with drastic solutions, a Bard dances around impossible revolutions; always talking about what they *could* do, but only doing anything after everyone assumed it was all talk. Bards weaken the grip of beliefs in reckless curiosity, trying to free their friends of shackles regardless of whether they can present an alternative or not - or whether those shackles had a point. Bards

destroy their aspect, but not directly like Princes: their statements invite others to question it of their own volition, or allow it to die through circumventing (or just ignoring) its conventions. The “grand cause” rarely appears (or is) more than aimless spitballing - but as we’ve discussed, a keen nose will smell gasoline waiting for a match. A Bard may prefer their spiritual fulfillment to remain elusive and mysterious, but they hold no power here; their aspect is the first and favourite thing to fight you on, an impossible standard, a mishandled injustice, what won’t hold them back (or accountable), their biggest blind spot, a topic of fascinating theory and no praxis, a lucky guess, a *wrong* guess they defend anyways, a broken fire alarm, a dead parrot, sporadic invincible compassion, an out of nowhere nuclear solution that changes everyone’s lives forever, and, *sometimes, very rarely,* something they know better than everyone else in the room.

That Bards started asking questions at a young age is no surprise - but finding commonalities for how it made them feel, how commonly it was outright abusive, even sibling dynamics, isn’t easy unless I’m willing to hold some of them at gunpoint. There is a Bard who stood out to me, who got a ramblin’ on recieving “Blood” on the Extended Zodiac. Apparently, his family had lots of relatives passing through and supporting each other, but he didn’t like that no one explained why he was supposed to care about these strangers. Since no one gave him a good enough answer, he called them by their first names without specifying “uncle” or “aunt” or whatever. He’s proud of that disrespect, and remained proud on his own interpretations of family for years to come, but it sure as hell proves my point.

While it *is* impressive when they show flashes of genius, and those rare righteous calls of a new world order blow Rogues out of the water, those are both in the rare moments when their jumbled jigsaw of a worldview snap into place - and *none* of that guarantees it’ll be actually beneficial for anyone. It’s appropo to call a Bard a wildcard, but beyond the pizazz, it highlights that they’re a human being you can never truly trust. They’re supremely lethargic, undermining anyone who expects more of them and so often failing to get why anyone has a problem with them in the first place. Undermining and mistrusting others is reflexive, conjuring second-wind arguments right when you think something might break through. Unqualified and unsolicited, their efforts to offend, enlighten, and question too often highlight how truly out-of-their-depth they are; laughing off wake-up calls and their own critics isn’t as funny as they think (or rather, hope) it is. Bards say everything and nothing, believe themselves humble yet ingenious, dogmatic yet skeptical, reject all restrictions yet constantly judge the lives of others. They can be inspirational gurus, manipulative monsters, emotional anchors or common shmucks, and intentionally blur those lines as much as possible. They delight in contradiction and confusion, too often thinking vague answers, directionless arguments, and wiggling out of problems means “winning”. They do *want* to help people, they just don’t listen to those same people when they try to communicate their patience or priorities

- *and that's the most frustrating part.* If a Bard has your back, if they get their priorities in order, then they can make all the competing voices of life seem so little and far away. A Bard's impenetrable defense can actually make them a defender, just like Rogues and Heirs before them...but they'll let you bleed out with a smile, if they can't be convinced to care.

Pidgeons and chessboards.

I can't write something a Bard would like reading that isn't wildly inaccurate. Some people have asked me to. I get it. It's definately possible. Maybe someone else could. But this is what I'm good at, and you KNOW who I'm talking about.

Prospit Bards, at least, never push anything past their own, *very specific* definition of "too far". Friendly and accomodating (though perhaps too proud of it), you can chat and joke with them for hours despite their tendencies to veer conversations in strange tangents or ramble to the point of drowning out everyone else, appearing(/being) disrespectful. Their most offending moments are likely under the influence, and they've probably already picked their poison. They take life one day at a time, and generally try not to worry beyond that - they can even undercut their own speeches and say it's probably nothing, not being sure where they're going with it. They're against rash action, except for times that they very much aren't, and the disparity between those whims frequently eludes them. In fact, this true lack of self-awareness makes them the much more dangerous of the two, with indignation and impulse taking such priority that they'll stampede over the wills of others. They're the most caught off guard that friends don't see them the way they think, or when they 100% beyond a shadow of a doubt were dead wrong and fucked something up. Remorse or rage still fires off at strange angles, and the reformations they make still border on tone-deaf - and that's whether they reform at all. Prospit Bards can be disarmingly manipulative if they can rationalize it, likely that they're not *really* hurting anyone. Whether they're bitter at life's shortcomings, complacent in unchallenged mental superiority*, or just innocently enjoying the company of their friends, it never really stops their stride.

You remember that Bard I mentioned earlier? Community leader. Kept things going for a decade, then...slipped it. I mean there was a combination of factors, I probably played a part, but that's neither here nor there. What matters is, he snapped a few times, and that righteous indignation stuck with me. After a hundred conversations of everything and nothing, of mindless tangents or greivous sin, he had this fire in his eyes - I recoiled. He was Blood-bound, and he certainly earned it. You want a taste of what his conversations were like, go listen to Greg Universe.

Derse Bards are true tricksters, whose legitimate intelligence and contemplations are masked behind a gleeful discord. While attuned to question and discern meaning from the world like any Bard, it's easy to miss; their signature move in friendgroups is pushing every joke

too far (frequently in *very* poor taste), fraying their ties to others as much as they're allowed, and being delibrately tone-deaf with whatever argument they're trying to make. They often end up with people just yelling at them to *shut the fuck up already*, which is too often met with more laughter, unphased. They're not idiots; square up for an argument, and they'll meet you with some surprisingly well researched speeches you might've never expected from them - though, occasionally, it's nakedly petty and narrow-minded. Sometimes they'll acknowledge this propensity to spin complete bullshit, only to double back and make exceptions for exceptions, as if resigned to be as uncooperative and unpleasant as possible. It's not impossible to get under their skin and throw them off-balance, but watching a Derse Bard hypocritically draw lines at what is and isn't appropriate, or insist they're an emotional pillar of support, only highlights the chronic self-sabotage they inflict upon themselves. Even then, just being insufferable isn't their worst; Derse Bards can get their kicks out of conscious, long-term manipulation of those they suspect (or make) vulnerable, where their self-serving excuses evolve into outright gaslighting. It probably won't add up to much beyond a thrill, but not much does; give it enough time, and Derse Bards are prone to become apathetic to their own apathy, where epiphanies, empathy, and philosophical clarity are more apparent than ever. The pertinent question is if anyone will be left at this point.

We've all met at least one.

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[you are the truthteller, the opposition, the new standard - if you're not, why are you still talking?]

MASTERS

(ARTISTS, MAGNATES, BRATS)

To **create** is to reconcile; that reality failed to meet the picture in your head, but to bridge the gap regardless of whether that's reality's fault or not. To go any further is to walk past the point of no return: to surrender autonomy (and accountability) entirely, and assume authority entirely. When improvisation of principle is no longer argued, but glossed over, feeding the certainty of someone who will know what is and isn't just, forever and always. With the strongest faith that beauty, life, and answers lie in the intangible, there are the few who **command** the full cosmic weight of their aspect. "Wait", you say, "This is still just a mundane human moral framework like the rest, but this sounds like these two classes are completely divorced

from reality. How do they function in society?" Be quiet and listen - the show is about to begin.

Alot of people in the Homestuck community say that you shouldn't assume someone is a Lord or Muse cause they're the MASTER CLASSES, which makes them too special to assume. I don't see why. There's lots of Lords all over the fucking place (ESPECIALLY back in the punk house I used to live in), and you shouldn't be in a hurry to be like one. Caliborn was right on the money after all, and Muses have their own peaks and valleys.

LORDS are the most singularly intense, self-assured, and weirdly optimistic living creatures you will ever meet. Bold, brash, and with almost no censor, their raw enthusiasm for life is as contagious as it is contentious - "doubt" is a 5 letter word. Altruistic despite aggression, Lords are drawn to others; they size up their complaints and shortcomings quickly, then try to set them straight with no-nonsense life-advice. However, this desire to mentor only highlights that Lords are *utterly consumed* by their own not-so-little world; they always prioritize their experiences, anecdotes, politics, irritations and mildest opinions over...well, facts, and they're either unable or unwilling to reconcile this slurry of identity, memory, and worldview with anything outside it. If this sounds like a two-dimensional cartoon example of the word "egocentric", sure, but **they don't know when they're bluffing**; Lords universally utter insanities like "I have never lost at anything in my life" and "I know more than expert scientists", and either ignore or talk past any transparent evidence to the contrary. This self-confidence leaves them strangled by personal failures they're unable to grasp, yet still capable of succeeding in half the Herculean labours they promise. They advertise themselves as poets with a grand vision, but breaking them to the point of self-awareness means someone matching their force of will - and if you aren't careful, you'll get caught in their orbit instead.

All the ones I've met keep slamming doors behind them. Like, they never look back to slow it, or dampen the impact. Is that relevant? There's also a general level of casual sexism or racism but it's not *quite* universal. I know this one media figure who's a big name on Breadtube; his rudeness is unmistakable, even if he's got some good politics. I liked one of his speeches, to be fair. It's one of those rare reminders that a Lord's strength can be worth it...when controlled, and not in complete denial of reality.

At the pinnacle of self-belief, it might explain why their meaning of life is so...individual. They only get this way because where Maids expand and stress-test the limits of their aspect, Lords cut all the brakes and smash through in every direction at once; they **command** their aspect, a true Inland Empire exporting the last word on the meaning of life. This does give them the iron will to push through situations that would even break a Maid, but a complete 1-1 synchronization between personal identity and universal meaning is incredibly dangerous. A Maid's fudged numbers and exceptions *become* the rule, with personal bias and the irritations of inconvenience subsumed into

an all-consuming metanarrative with one pallette and one interpreter. Not a micro-managing autocrat, but a static example of a perfect problem solver that the Lord either believes themselves to be currently, or will be - and that imagined future is concrete enough to draw strength from, even when everything else says otherwise. Generous but averse to dependency, affable despite a lack of accommodation, Lords endlessly produce assurances for the people around them despite having a blind spot in 10-and-a-half directions at once. They zero in on *only* the goals that excite them, taking their own improvised road there - which might be an easy shortcut, *or needlessly more difficult*. Scholarship is weighed equally to “a unique brain with great intuition”, and the former is optional depending on the person. A Lord’s aspect always tells them they’re a winner; it’s their favourite topic, their art, their science, their ultimate technique, the nature of our universe, the single direction of their boundless imagination, the reason why they’re so great, the reason why they’re always right, and what <u>you</u> don’t have enough of...but, what they’ll be happy to teach you, if you do everything they say.

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Every Lord’s got a story about their childhood. Sometimes, it was pretty bad, and the
only way out was a fierce independence of deciding their future - other times, they admit
they were spoiled with praise. Sometimes it’s a blend of the two, but those ones will
only make it sound like the former. I haven’t had the best experience with them, overall.
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Here’s the thing: we passed the Goldilocks zone of sustainable hype. Maids are stable so long as they keep their hands busy, but Lords need more fuel to keep the engine running - locked at eleven, no lower. As such, on top of being a workaholic (usually), Lords dip back into Page coping mechanisms: obsessing on the future, mythologizing their hardship, and looking for sympathy to their inadequacies and failed attempts. While these are often real sore spots, the Page dangers are a hundredfold worse; to omit <u>all</u> inglamerous details, to embellish their agency, to invoke it when they want something (attention, favours, sex), and to try and excuse indefensible acts. A Lord having a heart to heart is a massive red flag; even if they believe it, even if they want help, they’re still frighteningly good at hooking and reeling people in with double-think manipulation. Even if it’s not, trying to listen to the “depths of their soul” with an open mind only floods the mind with junk data and delusion that makes the rest sound *sane*. Lords are caught in a pyramid scheme run by their own ego, where reality is unfamiliar outside of it; the reason they bet money and their life on blind impulse, why “big breaks are right around the corner!”, is because they’re a *sucker*, and it’s made them lonely. They’re bound to an aspect and unbound to reality, drowning in fantasy without a Mage’s modesty, a Page’s caution, or a Maid’s dignity to help them survive. Ironically, the only way to fulfill any of their impulses is not to chase them, but control them; to have an open

mind to the words of others and accept *some* level of humility. Otherwise, they rot: a collection of excuses, empty promises, emptier threats, immaterial “connections”, intangible talents, lovers who live out of town, all a facade around a simple bully. Even they might realize they’re a sham, and that’s more pitiable than anything else.

“I SWEAR BABE, I SEXTED HER AS A JOKE”

I should be more sympathetic. I’m a Page, Lords are only two notches off. I know what it is to be lost in the “you” that you want to be, to chase something stupid and wonderful when the whole world tells you no. I *know* it’s stupid. Thing is, when you’re stuck thinking it’s stupid, you know you don’t have to, and you definately know it’s not fair to just be a massive crybaby about it. Between promises and childhood, nothing compares to who we are right now, and it’s down to you and your therapist to stop making that everyone else’s problem - to stop BEING everyone else’s problem.

Good isn’t something you are. It’s something you do.

Prospit Lords want to be your best friend, and rarely notice if you ask them not to. Loud, large, and in charge, their lust for life often blinds them to reading the room, and they’re generally caught off guard if people give them a hard “no”. Seeing their aspect as purely heroic, they act with the knowledge that anything they come up with fits into that category. No matter how overconfident, their autopilot leans altruistic; they’re here to help, they’ll listen to your problems (kinda), and even if their solutions suck you can just nod along. They often come off as harmless (if rude), but beyond hour long rants about their sexual conquest and this one dream they had, they’re cannier than their charisma implies. Prospit Lords see and speak life through a hazy dreamworld, yet often are treacherous and opportunistic in action where their words aren’t; the right hand doesn’t know (or ask) what the left is up to. Lies are created hastily, and often defended with fire in their eyes; red in the face, making a scene, alternating between rage and sorrow, all for crimes they did 5 minutes ago and will do 5 minutes later as soon as you turn around. Yes, they *can* grow, mature, and hold themselves responsible, but there is literally no way to tell based on their reaction. Their charismatic confidence is *too* perfect, *too* genuine, and they’re dangerously imaginative in storytelling. Don’t get me wrong, they’ve got smiles of eternal reassurance that’ll lift your soul up and make you think you can face the world...but be careful about following them. Sometimes they lead a charge into catastrophe on blind faith, and sometimes they throw people under the bus, proving they *knew* it was bullshit on some level. Maybe they’re a Lord who’s better, maybe they have standards, but trust that through witnesses and video cameras, not anything they say. Passion is no substitute for truth.

“Life is pain. Anyone who says different is selling something.”

I have, sparingly, met a few Prospit Lords I trust. It’s a delicate trust, one that I won’t hold to if I hear a contradicting story from someone else I trust. I’ve seen some

of them do incredible things. I want to say that's enough. But I've seen Prospit Lords deny domestic abuse, rape, shitting on top of a toilet, and steaing 200$ from me and blaming a friend of mine. They were never good lies - that toilet one admitted it all dramatically to some girl he was close to, and thought no one else was listening at that hour - but they always dig in to try and make those lies work. They unnerve me, as human beings. There's alot (not all, thankfully) in fiction who are written as exactly the never-say-die always-smiling heroes they present as. In reality, of course, it's more complicated. Heroes don't look like that, and too many of the real Lords just want to pretend to be a hero because it gets them something.

Bravery is knowing you're scared and pushing through anyways; if you can't fathom failure, you're just being stupid. Honesty is **telling the truth**; If you know better and won't admit you had a hand in the cookie jar, blubbering like an infant while you think of a million excuses, you're just fucking pathetic.

Derse Lords want to be your worst friend, and don't care if you ask them not to. Their instincts push them to be insistant, impatient, physically violent, straight up rude, and way too proud of all these things...*yet*, a Derse edge makes them far more lucid (perhaps even a sliver of shame) to the absurdity of their self-perception, and the things that come out of their mouth. Now, they're almost always nightmares as kids; unrepentent loudmouths believing themselves destined for fame and glory, reflexive in resorting to violence (if they're sure they'll win (expect cheating)) and lying as easily as breathing. It's very possible they won't grow out of this, remaining a tempermental brute weaving complete bullshit into personal myths - success is something stumbled into at this level of violent delusion. If they're smart enough to open up to the world, they can also "defuse": they can learn to laugh at themselves, nurture others without competing with them, and focus on casually shooting the shit with real friends (despite still having a short temper). It's also possible for them to become self-aware without being self-critical, resulting in a dangerous Maid^2; efficient yet undisguised narcassistic avarice, taking whatever they want and letting the automatic rationalizations sort the debris. No matter what, they keep the desire to mentor people, which can feel (and be) an afterthought to friends who put up with their behavior. Of course, that "help" is weighed down by Derse Lords reveling in conscious manipulation (still capable of double-think, mind you), which is easy to miss next to someone so transparent in all their other malevolence. Getting people to be their idea of "strong" will often mean playing dirty, and that's either a fun secret or justified only as "irrelevant". There is potential here, sure - real passion, compassion, wit, bravery, pain - but a Lord who knows better is not necessarily a Lord who won't.

Caliborn is a devout believer that all that matters in life - ALL that matters - is looking at the big picture of everything, breathing it all in...and smashing your fist into it so hard that the crater will never go away, and the ripples will shake everything around it. He's violent, rude, more than a little misogynistic, and continually eggs on everyone around him to be at his level of aggressive chaos. Fighting and fucking is wrapped in a paper thin excuse of "art" and "zen", a cheap mockery of Spacebound's tenants that only pushes for more fire. He does WANT people to be around him, to listen, to stop being so useless, but he refuses to do it in a way that's not an ass, and his outright manipulations to get them "on course" give him a hundred options to get his way

that don’t involve changing who he is. Changing his ways is “weakness”, and trying to change the world by breaking it into smithereens is nothing that cannot be healed, ignored, or forgotten by the masses he never truly understood as much as he thought he did. He’s a Derse Lord of Time - and so is Johnny Silverhand in Cyberpunk 2077’s depiction.

You really think the devs are fans of Homestuck or, more likely, every human being is a goddamn cliche and it doesn’t take a genius to spot them? Hell, most of them just end up as Dermott Venture, and we ALL know someone like that. I knew more than a few growing up, and it should be enough to remind everyone that Master classes aren’t rare, and they aren’t something everyone should aspire to be - most aren’t the rockstars they advertise themselves as, and even the superfamous aren’t pretty up close.

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[accountability. fix weakness]

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MUSES are unassuming at first glance, and insist upon that impression despite what they volunteer for. Graceful and softspoken, they ask little and often shirk away from the limelight; yet, they have alot to say, painting a coherent picture of morality that is all encompasing and accounts for all details. Many find themselves in awful situations, and endure insults or jeers that they seem strangely used to; in healthy enviroments with friends that care, they appreciate gestures but instinctively reject gifts. What matters to them is art, and many have what seems an unerring ability to pump out creative expressions. They might even be excited to show them off, but it’s almost always followed by speeches of how “It’s nothing” and “It could be better”. It doesn’t matter how insistant you are: Muses *prefer* being nothing, because their closest friends are <u>everything</u>. They naturally idolize others with a potency that blots out their self-identity, and this genuine adoration gives Muses friends-bordering-on-followers they never seem to know what to do with...but if they *do* start getting ideas, they’re very, very, very stubborn on them. Sure, they’re wallflowers, but they’re in the same weight class as Lords for a reason; they talk alot, believe their wildest claims, and motivate people forward without fully realizing they’re deciding direction. Muses know how to harmonize all the chaos and lurid insanity of the universe without ever lifting a finger...but if it sounds like they aren’t the ones deciding it, they haven’t noticed either.

“I’d be your voice
In a world that doesn’t listen to you
You can sing through my mouth too
We will harmonize
and all will be well”

-the muses’ lullaby, horizon

Muses have instincts to aim the entire weight of their beings onto the lives of other people, and the greater scope of the world around them. This unflinching certainty resolves the frantic anxiety a Sylph has towards things being *almost* perfect, at the cost of smothering their self-worth (and self-preservation) into an almost unsalvagable oblivion. A Muse is inclined to believe their place in the world is as an insignificant witness, only serving so that other people (or any idea of "a higher power") can speak through their hollowed will; to **command** their aspect in others, as a beacon or conduit, meant to reflect greatness back at its source. Their wants and whims are under the tightest scrutiny to not interfere with the perfect harmony of this purpose; there is a contempt for their gripes and autonomy, if not their existence as a whole. Of course, these are the opinions they decided were personal, and all the compassion and self-sacrifice in the world doesn't mean nothing will smuggle its way past their self-deprication. Their narratives would imply they're the ones being commanded, but it's never out of the question for them to step up to plate and coordinate; even then, it's a supremely subtle endevour, and they'll stay as isolated as possible until it's "done". Their aspect always manifests without their signature: the beauty they bear witness to, the party they organize but can't partake, the responsibility they can never profit from, our true fate, a grand theatre stage to deify their friends upon, and what you have so much of - even if they're the one giving it to you.

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Always some turmoil, but the ones I know don't talk about it easy. Whatever made them
hurt, and they're just doing their best to make it sound beautiful. It's all you can ask
of any classpect, but it's so hard to get them to include themselves.
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Whatever prestige is supposed to be won by being a "Master Class" seems lost on Muses, and it doesn't take alot of searching to see why; in the grand game of existence, Lords always believe they're a winner, and Muses believe they already lost everything. The crux of how they frame the world is pedestals for their confidants, and it's only while lifting others up that Muses can be *maybe, possibly*, persuaded out of seclusion. Still, Muses aren't all pure-hearted sugar; there is an alarmingly cold cruelty built into all of them, which reaffirms the "penitent" portion of their worldview. It's a side mostly shown to those they have no interest in accommodating, but even close friends might stretch a Muse's patience thin; like Knights and Sylphs, Muses struggle when they can't proccess another's behavior within their framework, and frequently won't say if they're running out of patience until it's all broken. While they can be a hurricane in these moments, they usually putter out into apologies and isolation...and then quietly resume their habits, rationalization, and conniptions. While not bossy like Sylphs, they exert more concealed authority, making it difficult to distinguish what they *accept* and what they're trying to *engineer*.

Muses are dangerously well equipped to decide <u>your</u> goalposts, intentions, inflections, and limits of potential - as though it was decided by the stars, and not the person in front of you. Now, this might be uncomfortable, but it's not really dangerous, what with Muses acting as helpless sacrifices to the forces around them...but they are kinda scary if they start thinking they're beyond that. They're fueled by tremendously powerful beliefs that all end with "for your own good", and embracing all that cold, dead isolation gives them confidence that can contextually outweigh compassion. At some point, "away from it all" became "above you all": how do you argue with someone who *believes* they have nothing to prove?

AltCalliope might be threatening, but she isn't off-script: both iterations are very much Muses, but only one started throwing their weight around. I've seen far worse in reality. I have to say religious Muses are the most difficult.

Prospit Muses are calm, content, and transparent about the grandiosity of their beliefs - which, given what we've gone over, still makes them difficult to argue as most definitions of "happy". Wearing their colours on their sleeve, even their cheeriest moments have an odd melancholy to them, as a distraction to what "matters". They're the most clearly articulated in the lines they draw between themselves and the rest of the world, and their high-minded principles make them difficult to negotiate with on a personal level. It's harder than it looks to become close enough they'll champion you, and it's harder still if they've been hurt before, finding more ways to rationalize what was already on their mind. They proccess things alone, and they're not used to people fighting with them, let alone *for* them. Growing past this, becoming more social, learning to trust their happiness, all of these are worth encouraging...but it's still worth keeping an eye on them, even at this point. Open-hearted doesn't mean open-minded, and their reluctance to changing their ways includes all that aformentioned bile. If they go full-on "cold fury harbinger" (for a day, or a lifetime) they won't flinch, selling both the conviction and their declarations with appropriate gravitose; there are obvious missed details and bias, but going face-to-face makes it easy to forget the argument you wanted to make, or what you wanted in general. They have an unparralled talent in intimidating others to not step out of line "for their best interest", which only gets better with practice and internalization. They might even be proud of it, threatening others not to mess with them, but it's important to reach past their barbs as much as their self-loathing - it's coming from the same place of martydom, and they truly don't have to let it define them.

They're a lot less scary when they don't have actual cosmic power like Calliope, but they still have a way with words. I know exactly who they are and what they're made of, and my blood still runs cold when they want to put the screws on. Course, my circumstances make

me a bit more reactive - I didn't grow up with one exactly, but I did get to hear all the arguments. I'll explain later.

...definately more than a few anime characters here...

Derse Muses sing the same song, but they seem to think it (and themselves) are stupid. Uncertainty and skepticism only drive the Muse's poor self image even further downward, and leave them hesitant to speak the principles they assume no choice but to live by. The silver lining in constantly asking people if they're being a nuisance is that they're much easier to talk to, with their powerful optimism and hero-worship ready to be invoked when people need it...and the slightly-more-obvious stormcloud is that they're constantly asking people if they're being a nuisance. Derse Muses are woobies, often emotionally taxing at the times where they're not emotionally inspiring. They're also not *entirely* well-intentioned, and are liable to omit a few details, play dirty, or outright guilt-trip others. Most of the time they just want to ride someone else's coat tails out of their chronic issues, but it's easy to lose track of what the appropriate solutions to those problems are. This behavior can easily become overbearing, but it can also get them hooked by abusers who learn how to manipulate them. It's important Derse Muses learn to set boundries, but they're still dangerous in their own right; they have teeth, even if they always hide them when not in use. It can be hard to know what is or isn't a healthy relationship for them, but they can probably change *your* definition of one...and you probably can't change theirs, even if you *are* the target of their affection.

I am pleased to be in the "best friends" category of a Derse Muse of Heart (I've repeatedly told her it's a bad idea). I know her well enough to say La Brava from My Hero Academia kinda' hits the nail on the head. I'm fond of her. Not everyone will be. But if you see any, keep an eye on them - I get it if they're causing trouble, but it's too easy for someone else to put them through worse.

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[wip. ironically im kind of lacking creativity on what to write. i mean, harp player, isolated, lonely, remembered by society, speaks of legends...something something]

INVERSION
(FLIP IT TURN WAYS)

Our assigned classpect is not all we are...but not in a way that cannot be systemized with further classpects. People *change*, sure, but alot of the time we change into what's already been brimming under the surface, baked into us since our minds first properly developed. It is our exceptions, our hypocrisies, the roles we run to when we're sick of ourselves, how we help others in ways we don't allow ourselves to be

helped, the sides we ignore despite them going off anyways, the shape we take when we need to be *more*. Call it your masculine/feminine/other-kind-of-neither side, call it the persona shadow, call it personal demons, call it whatever you want, but there's a second side to every coin.

Every active has a seperate language for accomodating others, every passive has a distinct voice of their own under the surface, and telling the difference helps us blend them into better combinations. Class inversions **invert the aspect as well**, meaning that we are fully capable of invoking and accepting that which disgusts us for too long of our lives. The terms we set, the lines we draw, the amount we allot, how much we even choose to admit, that is all personal - but at it's best, we are prepared for any situation, our needs and others, with either side of our personal axis to draw from and *hopefully* enough contentment to defer to those better suited. You want to untangle everything inside, find clear lines for who you are to yourself and who you are to the world? Here's everything you're working with - you decide where it goes, where you aim it, and how important it is to you. Your life is your story; the less control we exert, the more it belongs to the people around us, or the people that made us.

Despite many years of debate, Hussie (at least, someone on his behalf) has claimed that the long controversial "Inversion Theory" is debunked, and irrelevant to Homestuck.

I will argue that every character in Homestuck already follows inversion, and indeed classes would be completely unrecognizable if not for the twin impulses making up who they are, regardless of whether they realize it or not.

And even if that's not enough, every single goddamn human being in reality displays classpect inversion that it doesn't matter what we apply to Homestuck or not.

Personally, as a Page of Time, I think there's a certain thrill in **stealing choices** and new forms of personal creativity, in a way where we all benefit. So I'm gonna.

INVERSION CONT: QUICK GLOSSORY OF TERMS I MADE UP
(I'VE GONE MAD WITH POWER)

Impulse: We have to recontextualize classpects as a whole, as it's impossible (or at least, unprecedented) to have one without it's mirror twin. Every single class described only has its habits *because* of the interplay; a passive class with pride, breaking points, and self-loathing is expressing their active side, as much as the ways active classes show compassion (or at least concern) invokes their passive. This isn't a class "changing", it's just shifting the spotlight to which side is highlighted more, with no amount of conscious supression or invokation changing that neither will ever truly go away. Therefore, there are two impulses, and both want seperate things at the same time, but not in a way where they can't both win. For simplicity, these will be referred to as a "[class] impulse"; i.e., Class X has an X

impulse and a Y impulse, Class Y has a Y impulse and an X impulse, but this is universal and will never involve Z or B or whichever. Confusing the two impulses is, if nothing else, unfulfilling, so harmonizing them will be the consistently reccomended endgoal.

{Primary/Main}{Secondary/Inverted}: While both impulses exist, classes aren't a pointless distinguishment: a Mage of Time and an Heir of Space will both want and think roughly the same things, but their first aspect is considered "good" (usually) and their inverted aspect is considered "untrustworthy/unfamiliar/evil" (usually). Learning to respect and utilize these talents is important, but doesn't change one's default state (and personal favourites).

To elaborate on what I mentioned at the start of the brochure, my SpaceWitch friend has proposed the idea that there's something to explore in an even fuller inversion - inverted intensity, so you swap 1-4 and 2-3. This loses the whole "two halfs of the same mind" practical examination I'm focusing on, but there *might* be something to it beyond acknowledging the absolute polar opposites of a class. People get pent up or burnt out too easy, and that's kind of reflected when a class half-asses their inverse. I'll try to only mention it in passing, since it's speculation on top of speculation on top of speculation, all on the topic of real human lives with alot to lose.

True [class]: As above, while the inverted impulse is a valid filter to thoughts and actions, and classes can learn (or will accidentally display without prior knowledge) attributes and attitudes of their inversion, it doesn't change their default. Our hypothetical Mage of Time and Heir of Space would definately have alot of things to talk about and common life experiences, but their priorities, focus, and habits only reinforce original classification - it's best to think of an inversion as an "honourary" or "substitute" class.

Mind you I am 100% down for ascended class names; I mean "Thief" and "Knight" fit together as "Mercenary" so good it's fucking maddening it's not canon! Even the coloured pajamas Homestuck uses would go GREAT with some contrasting palletes!

Misfire: When an inverted (or, on rare occasion, primary) impulse is either ignored or consciously supressed, it still manifests in a way where an individual is still "verbing their aspect". Without the benefits of moderation or intent, this is often done in very unhealthy ways, especially compared to the utility of confronting and controlling it. **Do not try to "pick" which side of yourself is "correct" out of misplaced shame.** No arrangement of classes or aspects is evil; precarious, dangerous, volatile, absolutely, but *never* evil, *never* useless, and *never* without another side to balance it out.

The idiot that tries to only feed one wolf is the idiot who hasn't bothered to tame a feral wolf that even *they're* admitting they can't get rid of. It's a fucking wolf. Use it to pull sleds and eat people. No bad dogs, only bad owners.

..."Verbing the aspect" kinda sounds like innuendo, actually...

INVERSION CONT 2: ASPECT AKIMBO

(ATTUNE, ADAPT, ALCHEMIZE)

If we're going to be discussing how classes smush together, it's important to quickly preface how aspects fit as well. They're only oil and water if one were to try and invoke either in the same way one does their primary, which is why it must be tackled on our own terms - a deeply personal thing, to redeem all we fear and turn our eyes from. While it's unlikely something this brief will appease everybody, it might be enough to nudge longstanding ennui on a healthier path; remember, the more the two aspects start to sound like the same thing, the more progress you're making.

I'll be honest, what's coming is kind of sacchrine. Hopeful. Maybe edging on "telling you how to live your life" even more than I have already. Somehow, it feels more suspcious if it's optimistic, you know? I dunno it's just...this *is* the nice stuff. This is, too often, just the way people finally figure themselves out and feel at peace. Isn't it kind of exciting to be able to, you know, systemize that?

This stuff helped me close the gap with stuff I'd been wrestling with for decades. It's not like anything would've done it; an old internet quiz put together by a fan back in 2012ish gave me "Page of Space". I knew I was a Page, I knew I had a creative streak, but even though I tried not to overthink it, I still felt like my impulsivity and impatience were interfering with it. I felt more like a failure than ever, like all my family's violence and trauma had corrupted what was I was supposed to be. Even if I hadn't read "Page of Space", it's not like anyone else had any good advice for who I was or what I should do - people have been telling me to slow down my entire life, always seeing what they want to see, or what never was.

The Extended Zodiac, getting back into Homestuck, it all...it didn't give me any *new* words to articulate myself. It just gave me a pat on the back for everything already brewing, with the acknowledgment that I am still 2 notches off from Caliborn (and, at its core, I'm not doing much different). I've been doing my best to see how well this stuff helps others, and I've had some nice moments of helping them close the gap with their demons - or hearing their epiphanies, and being just a little salty I had it down in print for at least a year.

I'm not a nice person. But I am an optimistic one.

TIME AND SPACE: True Contentment, Frail Mortality, Absurdity of Existence, Legacy, Delight in the Temporary, Derealization, Oblivion, Lucid Autonomy

Time and Space have the most and least incentive to change respectively. Time's paradoxical status as "the belief against beliefs" breaks upon reflection, like Wile E. Coyote over a cliff. As inevitably as it fetishizes inevitabilities, the Time aspect cannibalizes itself: the "belief of the material world" was never more than hypocrisy, where the idea that the vast uncaring universe has any kind of objective victory condition - let alone "money, sex, and power" - is grossly naive. None of it ever mattered, none of it could ever matter, nothing has ever mattered, we will all pass into bleak oblivion, and we may as well have done nothing at all. Time is as much a lying delusion as it accused Space of being (which it still is), but the only way to make

either true is to see the other side: live wire in the silent garden, artist in the screaming meat fuck. Time's obsession with the material can evolve from projection to honest deference, where Space flourishes in a world it wrote off; that when nothing matters, *everything* matters, and the complete lack of any "grand scheme of things" means every possible concept of every possible thing is exactly as significant as we choose for it to be. Space's concepts become convictions to be fought and killed over, while Time expands surrender past a *cosmic* will, into the now multicoloured meatscape of humanity; every loss is someone else's win, to die is one more great adventure. Between the bindings of "I gotta" and "I cannot intervene", there is the only true proof of existence, and the only true choice: "I'm gonna do whatever the fuck I want, and whatever happens happens". Time would rather imagine itself a corpse or machine, just as much as Space would imagine itself a flower or cloud, but only together do they make where the falling angel meets the rising ape - a miracle of matter, a god unto itself. a human being.

Always found it funny how often punk rock blends into Buddhism.

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HEART AND MIND: Contradictive Priorities, Human Error, Weighing all Whims Exceptions to Systems, Compartamentalization, Accountability, Contextual Logic

It is the signature of the Heart and Mind aspects to mythologize their emotions and goals respectively, blossoming either into a flower that overtakes the other. Regardless of favouritism, this is the same framework - even moreso than it initially appears. There are logical approaches to life, but no logical destinations, no "objective success". Mind is less machine as it is simply faux-superego, chasing objectivity with the most palletable cultivation of subjectivity; why speak for only yourself, when you can - no, *should* - speak for everyone? More than ever, it should be apparent why the Mind aspect rests between Space and Hope, as there is a longing to escape the more material inverted aspect - which is only, you know, *literally* personal bias. Sure, Heart is openly self-sabotaging, openly unpleasant, openly illogical - yet, does its efforts to systemize and organize itself create a logic in protest? Is there not inherent categorization in which desires are more "deserving"? Whether this is bleedover or a true mirror of Mind's systemization, it goes both ways: is the "calm chessmaster" anything besides another mask? Is the culling of emotion not simply picking favourites? Run rampant, the Mindbound demonize all errant emotions until the depressive shame creates a feedback loop, and the Heartbound mythologize identity to the point it is divorced of the

brain it represents - even others. If the Heartbound enshrine their obtrusive multifacets, is the Mind's craving for apersonal enlightenment not one more? If the Mindbound seek unbiased clarity, is it not hypocritical to reject these compulsions, rather than organize them as well? In synthesis, the system of the soul, where intellect admits what it has to gain, where one *selects* which masks define the whole, and where understanding and empathy beget each other. To say anything more is to kill the point, and take the adventure of self-discovery from those who cherish it the most.

`Nepeta still deserved better.`

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HOPE AND RAGE: Salvaging Defeat, Exhausting Possibilities, Testing Thresholds, Redefining the Impossible, Merit of Delusion, The Long Defeat, Happy Sisyphus

Hope and Rage are naturally combative in a way few aspects are. Hope is inherently overpromising, and Rage is deeply committed to punishing this weakness; the Hopebound's tendency for self-critical flakiness is better explained knowing that 50% of their brain is yelling at them all the time. Yet, is Rage not equally unhappy with the state of the world? Is this *idea* of sanity only holding back what's actually possible, as its own ironic madness? That one can rage against their chains not to break away from the world, but drag it with you into the sky? Rage is not Hope's enemy: Rage is Hope's tsundere love interest, business partner, and best fucking friend. While simple defiance is something Hopebound already employ, it's only ever fragile sugarcoating if you don't have the raw *grit* to address all of life's shit-coated ugly. Rage blends its values with the wants of Hope, making *at least some* of those dreams possible, and ready to push on if it fails. This all goes further then simple strategy: the silver linings rest on a stormcloud, and you better be ready to feel the *thunder*. Hope (with Rage's help) is kinder than Life, more sympathetic than Doom, louder than Light, more natural than Void, smarter than Mind, more intimate than Heart, tougher than Blood, more untethered than Breath, more creative than Space, and `(I hate typing this)` hotter than Time - which is to say, it wasn't until it had to be. Rage defends Hope's delicate constitution against critics with "**WHO THE FUCK ASKED**", making for speeches that inspire as much as they intimidate...and as soon as you believe that, as soon as it challenges your preconceptions, all that dumb fantasy becomes as concrete as the ground you walk on. Even then, sometimes it's simply better to rage against the world we have in name of the world we want; in memorium, in longing, and in the

bitter promise to always try. It’s a different kind of compromise - and a kinder one.

“Page of Hope” is technically the most powerful classpect combination. I’m still happy being me; if I wasn’t so obsessed with the paradox of existence, I wouldn’t be able to write this, would I? Course, I do know two Rogues of Rage...

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LIGHT AND VOID: Contradictive Conclusions, Invoked Narrative, Integration of the Forgotten, Blind Eyes, Making Myths, Hyberbolic History, Delight in Artifice

It is the Lightbound’s rigid definitions of their primary class that makes them the most in need of inversion - or rather, to have it directly pointed out to them all the many times they’ve *already been* their Void class, expressing Void-flavoured sentiments. Then again, what truly is “Void-flavoured”? Even the Voidbound themselves often don’t know, making their Lightsided inversion not only easier for themselves to describe, but often is their most memorable qualities to those around them; the part that stands out, the part that talks, the part that confronts. You wanna know what Void is? It is freedom without Breath’s purposeful optimism, subjectivity without needing Heart’s violent passion, and expression without Space’s greater calling. The Void aspect asks for nothing and provides nothing - in doing so, it reflects the individual clearer than any other. Whim, hobbies, emotions, ideas, only ever sorted as unsorted, all shrouded in a shrug; the associated class embraces or encourages this state, then does whatever it wanted to do in the closest display of free will. And yet, a side will always contemplate and pine for those constrictive conclusions of “destiny” - one more delusion, as all aspects are. Symbols are not of the material world, not a tangible thing, but they run alongside it; man cannot exist without making a narrative over what’s in front of us. It is Void that tempers these cathartic calls to action, sorting legend and history, myth and nonsense. In the retreat, Void makes its own meanings, and appreciates those that have none yet; although, “don’t rush to conclusions” is a conclusion itself, possibly from someone who’s trying to avoid what the Light might see. It’s important not to decide what did or didn’t happen - only to *choose* how relevant we want it to be, drawing constellations in the sky. Everyone has a story, and we all get to choose what it is - even if we think it was chosen for us, and even if we think we never did.

My brain hurts everytime I try to articulate the Void aspect. I’m serious, it’s some cursed knowledge shit. I re-read this and its like a blot.

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BREATH AND BLOOD: True Leadership, Fleeting Connections, Collective Direction, New Traditions, Found Family, Forgive without Forgetting, Nostalgia, Lucid Morality

That the Blood aspect encourages leaders is obvious - that Breath does, less so. Breath breaks away from the old, forgives sins, forgets grudges, soothes all pain, and insists that the past is the past; while this assurance of an optimistic future is innately magnetic, why does it care about who listens, let alone who follows? Blood is very much sins, grudges, punishment, sacrifice and staying in the past...but then, why try to make anything better, if suffering itself is a core tenant? Inversion often serves as an existential failsafe, yet with these aspects doing their best to avoid internal conflict, the balance between them is often accidental - and tentative. Blood and Breath still too easily redouble themselves into absolutes judged worthy by itself, where Breathbound have completely relieved themselves of the burden of others burdens, and the Bloodbound harden grudges and expect debts until *everyone* isn't "pulling their weight". It is without balance within themselves, and without an open mind to the world around them, that both aspects will create people too goddamn pleased with themselves to realize no one's happy - not even them. It is principle beyond interrogation - only "Freedom" and "Pain" - where the purpose is either supplied by the people around them, or dismissed entirely. The truth is, these might actually be the hardest aspects to balance, where the inversion is only seen in harsh snaps - but those can still be harsh snaps that are *chosen*. The advice here is not about what concepts these two aspects explore together, but for those bound to snap out of their seductive dogma for a second and ask what they actually want to do; what traditions to keep, what innovations to try, which friends to keep, which friends to make, what to punish, what to forgive, why why *why*? You have to to take back control of your life, or you'll either give it to everyone else, or forget you ever had it.

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I still love my brother. I always will.
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LIFE AND DOOM: Proccessed Pain, Support Networks, Boundaries, Therapy, Accommodation, Reconciliation, Perfect Imperfections, Acceptance of the Unsalvagable

Hilariously, it is the fetishization of failure that makes the Doombound more likely to notice and accept the Life inverse that compromises them - though the existence of "rot for rot's sake" extremists do exist. Venting is healthy, seclusion is okay if you haven't got the energy, letting people down is better than lying, don't pretend to be nice and

just bottle up resentment - it's all so much more obvious when you're starting from the bottom up. What's also obvious is that trying to create the perfect happy community from the top down creates an ironic dysfunction of its own, where you just can't admit that it's already gone so wrong. For the Lifebound, to invert is a failure state, submitting to a potent misery that they haven't learned to see as anything else - that they haven't *let* be anything else. Just bottled up regrets and misgivings, while a whole half of their psyche does nothing but build it up as a cosmic force. The aspects - both in the individual, and the world they attempt to create - cannot exist without each other, but the Doombound's rot is bittersweet, and the Lifebound's rot is rancid; to hide it, to suppress it, to deny it, is only to poison everything they're trying to acomplish. Even then, the Lifebound will frequently only embrace their Doom half to address the current problem, say they fixed it, and go on business as usual without knowing if that was just a symptom or not. In learning the lessons they're *forced* to learn rather than the ones they *need* to learn, they hit every branch on the way down to finally knowing their own limits...though, there's still Doombound are at the very bottom, unwilling to climb. Community is at it's best when everyone knows how much they can - and *want* - to put in. We can't *always* be perfect, and we certainly can't *always* be misreable, and it's both healthy *and* resigned to accept that rather than pin the blame on everyone else.

It's a very specific pattern of behavior for the Lifebound. Don't get me wrong, people push themselves, but what I've written here applies for the Heir, Sylph, Prince, Rogue, and even *Mage* I know. A Mage! A Mage of Life! Bless his heart he still has trouble speaking his mind to people, but he's getting better!

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Now, how to fit that full picture inside the canvases we already discussed...

TIER 1: FATE AND FREE WILL

(WELCOME TO THE BIG LEAGUES)

With all the high-strung high-stakes we've discussed, it's easy to diminish the importance of those most subtle and most humble. Hypothetically, this document could have been arranged to explain the most intense first and work backwords, or any combination, and it wouldn't change that Prophets and Magicians are extremes in their own right. They can draw strength from others or themselves, and do either so elegantly they have no incentive to try both; without ambition, potential is a hypothetical that jeapordizes more than entices. Sure, they have their sore spots and rough patches, dealing with it and not making it anyone else's problem...but you turn those

few weaknesses into strengths, you wind up with more than the sum of your parts.

As soon as you **know** your fate, you can **change** it.

MAGES AND HEIRS are the living, breathing, manifested form of that old “Serenity to accept the things I can’t change, courage to change the things I can, wisdom to blah blah blah” quote. They’re both steady, quiet about their own issues, and don’t trust anyone to do anything without them - yet, both fear their other habits, to the point of defining themselves by the exclusion for as long as possible. The consistant throughline is someone sure of themselves while always being *twitchy* in regards to the outside world; Heirs commit to “fixing” everything, Mages shut themselves away, and these exaggerated self-perceptions hamstring *both* of their inevitable snaps into one another. Sure, fix everyone else’s problems, but a docile presentation masks that Heirs are not always unable to fix their own issues: they may be *unwilling*, acknowledging that as infrequently as possible. For the intentionally alienated Mage, trying to become invested in other people’s problems always threatens to disturb their existing conclusions - “subtle guidence” often misfires as “bare minimum of appeasement”. Crisis and stress results in Heirs snapping into Mage isolation without a road back, or Mages snapping into action and making it worse from a precendent of (or continuing) disinterest in negotiation or basic empathy. Neither sees alternatives: the personal prophet and the Chosen One have only ever seen one route for themselves, but there was always middle ground between saving or ignoring everyone around them.

Blood Mage and Light Mage - John knows friendship (and the mess of ancestry his dad goes on about), Equius knows his culture (and their ridiculous myths), and both put up a decent fight before...well, I guess it didn’t really go great for either of them - especially if we’re counting epilogues. Beyond that, Meulin’s an awful Heir of Mind, but being awful at it only highlights she is one, at least partially. If we’re trusting Hussie that all the dancestors were based on fanon misrepresentation, then people underplaying Sollux’s preference for isolation explains alot...

My brother is, still, an Heir of Breath. He also claims to know our father more than most. I still dispute that, and think it’s a somewhat pressing situation to address. I wonder if we’ll ever see eye to eye.

To **know** yourself as something static and true, while trying to **change** the lives of those around you with a gentle touch is, all in all, a pretty great combination of traits...which makes it a tragedy that it’s snapped in two like a wishbone. Mages and Heirs suffocate a side of themselves, and miss the nuance of their opposed aspect in the proccess - but not for lack of trying. A misfiring Heir impulse is *just enough* to get people to leave a Mage alone most days, and malleable enough to do whatever they need it to do on the days they feel like

getting involved - all essentially selfish. What's more interesting is that a True Heir's single-mindedness and sturdy resolve is almost entirely the result of being built of Mage components...but that's a monkey paw situation if there ever was one. Where a True Mage sees imperfections as part of the greater whole, an Heir's Mage impulse sees a world of imperfections they lack the language to accept...which only further explains why a Mage's Heir-ish involvements are so often unapologetic, on top of the previously discussed self-imposed hinderences. They're both really good at each other's job on the days they don't misread the instruction manual - yet, more than efficiency, they're denying half their available methods to just feel *okay* with the world.

See it was SpaceWitch talking about her brother (a Derse Heir, with both of them raised by a Derse Lord), drawing a conclusion between Heirs and Lords that made me send her my constructed MSpaint chart - and that's what got her so excited she designed the globe model. So then, the idea that Heirs and Lords are the truest opposite? There's merit. Those moments of individuality have such weight (and sometimes violence) where you can see a similarity of approach, the same way Lords underestimate the weight of their mentoring. I'd argue this is more of a pent-up misfire, but maybe there is something worth examining on their relationship...hell, John and Caliborn are the closest Homestuck has to a "true good guy" and "true bad guy". There's a narrative there if you want, no matter how you slice it; the true King with magic they doubt or downplay, and the rich tyrant with a musical magic seen as a dubious excuse.

As for Mages? Like I've said, they have a tendency to get pretty..."excited", sometimes, tripping into a social fervor they usually don't humor. I've seen it enough in real life that it makes Meulin's attitude worth keeping in mind...and, kind of funny, given the name I picked for that post-Bard class. We'll get there when we get there, but it's just nice how things work out sometimes.

If you wait long enough, an Heir will understand their Mage side - they just tend to forget how to be an Heir when they do. If you wait a lifetime, there is still no guarantee a Mage will change their strategies, or not feel uncomfortable playing emotional anchor. These are, plainly put, unnecessary limitations placed upon oneself, strangled by comfortable tragedies over unfamiliar hope. Life's more complicated than being "everything to everyone" or "fine" forever, but acknowledging that makes it easier. You don't have to sacrifice or succumb to anything; an Heir is *less* of a hypocrite for taking some of their own advice every now and again, and a Mage's conclusions become sharper when field-tested. It's going to be hard to unlearn some habits, and harder still to challenge personal narratives, but that doesn't mean anything drastic or sudden - just have an open mind. Be there for other people, but take solace in your own soul when you know it's better to be patient. Be open with your conclusions, allow them to be challenged, and remember whatever calling you're feeling is something you wanted to do on some level. Rejecting it is an option, but that's an internal dialogue; your perception of the outside world and personal responsabilities shouldn't be confused with what's actually happening. You're always where you feel you have to be, but there's power in setting your own terms - we make our own fate.

Heirs are endearing little bundles of self-hatred, and I still hope I can help them finally give a seal of approval to their friends and themselves - to not run as soon as they're not needed, to not plant seeds of doubt so they always are. You can sit on that throne and be a King with the power of prophecy, even reform the monarchy to a democratic parliament...but just as many Heirs are gonna go find a different kingdom to save, or go back to the farmhouse they started in. Maybe more. Maybe all. Even with Mages, it's not like understanding an Heir impulse automatically makes them one; you could go with "Arch-Mage" or "Wizard" for some authority, but the door's open for things as simple as "Alchemist" or "Wanderer". There's alot of potential new class names and interpretations, but it depends on the individual, and what they want to associate with their own life. I just have my own longings, watching them work magic and hating to see them go. If we can't *own* our classpects, if we can't *do it for us,* because we *choose* to...what's the point? All I can do is open doors, and try not to judge which are walked through.

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WITCHES AND SEERS border on complete indistinguishability from each other (barring Seers leaning too far into lecture without playful mirth to balance it). As it turns out, "doing a little for myself" and "neutrally observing the world" have such low upkeep it's easy to misunderstand as nonexistant, and neither class is going to be in a huge hurry to fight for the spotlight - or fight for anything, when they can wait, manipulate, or settle. They chase and present contentment, but they can't cheerfully stay two steps ahead of depression forever; they *can* minimize fallout exceptionally well, but let's start this discussion with the pretext that hiding your pain is a failstate. Other people are reliable to hold on to, and one can always drudge up some personal fixes, but this is something they likely already know and practice; helping them cope more efficiently is on the table, but arguing they're more important than they think they are feels more pressing. They both tend to dance around insecurities, and see presenting otherwise as a conscious falsehood...but this idea that somewhere, deep down, they're "no good" is an unconscious falsehood. Even if you fit both pieces together, they might still see themselves as broken with no way to smooth out those edges, but you know what? Good. Maybe being prickly is form and not fragmentation; helps you catch the light better to shine, and helps stab a few people who have it coming too.

Finally, my kink for manipulative-yet-self-depricating damaged women pays off. What? We going to pretend for a second that Terezi and Rose don't match to "Witch of Heart" and "Witch of Void" flawlessly? It's easy as soon as you realize you were allowed to look for it, just as much as Feferi and Jade make compelling Seers of Doom and Time respectively. I've known WAY too many in real life to not have this scent down like a bloodhound, and I hope I can make a compelling enough case that you see it too.

And let's not pretend Kankri didn't have *sass.*

To **change** what concerns you, and to **know** the world around you; the interplay is obvious, but the result is still a perception of being untethered, if not outright "lesser". An unknowable loose element in a sea of quantifiable figures - static, understandable, organized,

attuned. Seers often plunge head first, but Witches tread water in interesting ways. A misfiring Seer impulse will manifest in dependencies to louder voices and colour their Witch-Spiral-Speech(tm) (which, honestly, always was just snapping into an angry Seer) but it also results in mistrusting their own praise and understandings; Witches can make beautiful speeches towards the great impartiality of the universe that comfort and enlighten, but they were rarely *trying* to. This leads to downplaying whatever they said in the past despite its lingering good, and rarely speaking up if they consciously recognize the stakes - call it stagefright, call it unworthiness, it's still unnecessary. For Seers, a misfiring Witch impulse is usually for screwing with people, and the precise way that they're able to influence them into favourable (or just interesting) positions. While this can be altruistic (despite firm - even exclusive - control), it is a misfire by virtue of how *horribly* Seers practice self-care. True Witches may also not solve longstanding problems or accept outside help, but they do cope more efficiently - as previously mentioned, Seers are really good at hiding the fact they're running their life off a cliff from the people who would object to that. They're outsiders who try to stay outsiders, acomplishing little more than the Witches who feel like outsiders no matter where they go.

"You must really hate me, huh?", they say, always, eventually, vocalizing the assumptions they nurse. Do they want an answer? A retort? Of course their friends love them, of course they'd *fight* for them, but that answer is hard to trust. Seers try to logic their helplessness, Witches romanticize their helplessness...both tend to wind up with people who *keep* them helpless. If you reach out to pick them up, they can always push back.

This? This here? This text? This is the nuclear approach of someone who's sick of watching it happen. Sure it's still their decision, but it's a purposefully misiformed decision, and they both know that - if they didn't, they wouldn't be so surgical in arguing against it. If you lose the academia *and* the romance, it's harder to justify the death-flag they keep putting on their head, and the company they keep. Not impossible. I can't stop them. But either know better, or lie better, because it hurts to watch.

The pain is slight, but consistant - familiarity lulls one into a false sense of security. Self-loathing to smile through, at the risk of tainting the idea of smiles - or you tough it out, and set your terms for who you've got a problem with. A passive impulse to be someone's side character, an active impulse to live a seperate story; Seers treat their place in the world as utility, where Witches treat moments of splendor they have no instinct to explain to anyone as some justification they shouldn't reach further. Both aspects end up underplayed, but are we to assume low upkeep means low quality? Fuck that - a few bad spots and stutters don't change either class being unforgettable, with sharp wits that can be forgiven for misjudging their own self-worth. A framework of the world is always fuzzy, but Witches turn their eyes from it where Seers try to see a whole that never comes into focus - it's *supposed* to be fuzzy, so those twitchy hands can get experimenting. If you're worried about hurting people, don't; if you

think you’re insignificant, know better; if you’ve got something you find beautiful, share it, because it doesn’t change that it always belonged to you. Don’t ever feel like you don’t belong just because you’re lucid; the world is yours to upset or improve, paired with enough explanation to guide your hands and enthrall those involved. You’re exactly who you’re supposed to be, and you know exactly where you want to be - so do it, cause you never needed me or anyone else to tell you.

Sorceress/Sorcerer? Warlock? Shaman? Mystic. Arcanist? Do we endorse Kankri and just say Messiah? Oh, whatever, they’ll come up with something themselves.

TIER 2: BONDS AND LIBERATION

(SET YOUR LIMITS, THEN CROSS THEM)

Needless suffering is not hidden in regards to the class pairs discussed here; struggling to follow or break every rule is, in fact, emotionally and physically draining. Whether Servant or Outlaw, there is a self perception of being expendable pawns or off the board, not here for accolades or authority. Of course we are in control of our own brain delusions, and it’s important to take ownership of that, but it does mean that finding themselves isn’t going to *abandon* their complexes. There’s limitations in sticking to procedure, just as many in subverting it, and every class here *knows* that by virtue of constantly waxing wistful for a life they’ve artifically deemed off limits.

Exploit only the rules that can be justified, and **steal** everything else.

PAGES AND ROGUES are an (initially) unsustainable union of impossible personal standards and fragile alternatives that barely belong to them. Both sides tend to cancel themselves out if one is favoured without the other, and they spiral out of control on the rare occasions they don’t. A Page impulse is basically non-functional out of the box, and can only be entertained in fantasy and harmless pretend; for True Pages, this is the starting point while trying to attain practical application, while Rogues have their aformentioned difficulty ascertaining their sense of self due to atrophy. Without confidence, Rogues too easily fall into their also-aformentioned mess of excuses and depersonalization...which is the *exact same rut* Pages perform in complete depressive despondancy. It’s even worse since the inverted aspect is a failure state, with Pages retreating to the corrosion of their doubts and failures, guilty for reprieve to the expectations hanging over their head - and what does that say about Rogues? To have the “impossible standard of who you’re supposed to be” read as a threat? They’re an outlaw running from themselves, trying to save others

from the pressure *they* put themselves under, while broken Pages too often end up gloomier diet-Rogues from the same ordeal. The searchlight and the spotlight are one in the same, but who ever said you can't run *and* fight?

Pages are not a passive class. I do, however, get why you might think that.

You're just wrong.

Rufioh being the manifestation of misrepresentation surrounding Tavros is as clear as day. Even if we neglect Hussie's word, his writing sticks: Tavros fears letting loose, while casually able to negotiate the bonds of others, and freely gifting his suffering to people who don't deserve it. Rufioh, meanwhile, *seems to have trouble with commitment*, and his much more defined excuses are to remedy that. His little bunch of lost boys staying together are a Page of Blood half-manifesting, but only ever half, where Tavros's grand calls to action are always about going forward. I also shouldn't need to explain how Nepeta may resemble the diligence and conviction of a Page of Mind, or how Jake and Xefros both reflect the approaches of trying to balance Hope and Rage from different sides.

It should also be pretty friggin' obvious how interested **I** am in negotiating and reinventing the creative expressions of everyone around me - which is to say, you, reading this. It's not unbecoming of a Page of Time, it's almost *inevitable*. I'm fine with that.

Exploit an aspect to it's best and no further, and **steal** another to freely fix problems as they come - take a step back, and it's almost *too* simple how these two fit together. The passive impulse allows Pages to meet people halfway with negotiations for their craziest ideas, where the active impulse gives Rogues a method and backbone to their most divisive disagreements or bohemian desires, and either class can alternate as it suits them...at an end point, anyways. Pages are beaten and broken by their primary impulse, and misread their second impulse as "cheating" - *guilty* pleasures, *undeserved* breaks, *incorrect* shortcuts. These ideas exist for a reason; Page beliefs do not work out the gate, never will, and they need to rest and compromise. More than that, one of their most quintessential characteristics (and the reason they're a black sheep between Mages and Maids) is a Rogue touch: **stealing solutions** by absorbing quotes, morals, gimmicks, and everything else from the world around them. Pages reinforce their personal identity out of what they can do for people around them, but they can still twist this into meeting people halfway while only ever dragging them to their side - to manipulate and subvert with the inverse, but only accepting totality. Still, if you let everyone else have their way every time, then too many voices corrupt and dismantle certainties, and violate one's self worth. Rogues have the same problem, without often realizing they *had* personal certainties in the first place. Restructuring their primary passive aspect into whatever people want doesn't need a Page worldview, but it does *help* when they want to stand up to someone and stick to their promises. Rogues always put pressure on themselves, but it's not for the reasons they think - they, too, are built not to serve *people*, but

their *gut*. Unreasonable as it might be, it's still theirs; more than demonizing their opposed aspect, they can do it correctly.

My childhood was too much yelling, pressure, insults; people age, but rarely grow. It's taken a long time to try and choose who I am, but I'm not blind to why it is this way: a suffocated ideal of determination unearned and out of reach, loose excuses trying to keep up with contradictory beliefs and values. So many unfair arguments from people trying to protect their egos, and so much fragile hypocrisy from those who didn't believe in anything past short-sighted irritations of the moment. I took in everything they said, tried to make it work, and now I'm strung out on fundamentals of existence for the rest of my life - at least Rogues get to acknowledge it less.

Everybody wants something - we take contentment in things that hurt us. I've been spending my whole life trying to make that something functional. If you are a Page or Rogue, I hope I can save you some time, and sneak in some alternatives I wish I had sooner. If something good comes of it, then hopefully we all aren't just broken records, looped on trauma.

They both *want* to help people, but it is in questioning themselves that the other side never makes it too far; ignored obligations, ignored alternatives, two impulses that blame the other fighting for the position of superego, and the worst deeds done when both are ignored. Pages and Rogues have their sense of self bound to selflessness, their identity tied to toil, their happiness defined by everyone else's; the objective to overpower or subvert all hardships they possibly can, and comfort those hurt by what they couldn't. Neither side on their own has enough heft to truly silence their doubts, to carry them through all fights, but there's a silver lining there: when you hit your limits, swap to the other. To build a code *anyone* (not just you!) could live by, to break rules holding *anyone* (not just your friends!) back, indulgance and diligence balanced contextually for every moment, failure is a part of life, and the work is it's own reward - your aspects don't cancel themselves out if you *fucking dual wield them*. The imbalance is in forgiving everyone else while refusing to forgive yourself - or carrying everyone to the finish line, when some people need to be told they failed, and that there are consequences for that. Don't try to meet someone halfway when it's obvious they aren't bothering to try, or just want to see how far they can push you. Be kind to yourself, don't let yourself be taken advantage of: you're not lesser, you're not a failure, you're not a lapdog, you're not a stressball. The fact you can function without needing to prove that to everyone is just a reminder you only ever needed to prove it to yourself. Go be the hero; the one the Page always wanted to be, the one the Rogue wished would show up, and the one they both always were.

...pretty sacchrine, but I can never bring myself to change it entirely.

You know, I've had too many people try to decide who I should be - which is ironic given everything I'm doing here. I really am trying to meet people halfway, inbetween highlighting bad habits and pits (dunking on Bards is probably the most needless violence but still). It's just...my family especially, they always give me weird looks. Maybe they think the aspie wasn't going to notice, but it's all I'm looking for; I got some high minded ideas of where I want to go, and everyone keeps chiming in. Settle, don't settle,

assert myself more...I dunno. Maybe my brain locked on to this Page/Rogue dynamic just because I felt I had to meet them all simultaneously, but there's a rule to Pages: we only learn the lessons we want to learn. We pick who we emulate, and we awkwardly try to argue our way around the things that repel us. It's hard. We can't tell the difference between reprieve and a rut most days. But we still have to try. It's a part of us, the same way our fragile compromises with others are ourselves to. There's a reason I've made this document so personal despite ostensibly being a public resource, and it's for more than whim, limitations of my language, or the merit of anecdotes

I don't know about everyone, but rather than get weighed down by nobility, I like the individualism of "adventurer" or "explorer". "Champion" if I'm feeling presumptious - and I'll decide for myself if it is or not. That goes the same for anyone reading this.

I swear Tavros is the only one who actually made it.

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THIEVES AND KNIGHTS have diametrically opposed self-perceptions, to the point of making the comparison *more* obvious. Thieves are always trying to prove themselves against the establishment (that they project), and Knights are always trying to enforce a system that never benefits (or includes) themselves. Both are *terrified* of submitting to the other impulse, both *inevitably* will at various points of their lives, and they seem to think that there's no going back once they do. These impulses result in the same worldview no matter what's at the forefront at any given time: they're an immutably bad person, they do evil because of that, they do good to make up for that, nothing ever fills the hole inside, nothing about their relationship to the world can be changed, Prospits try to settle with it, Dersites laugh about it, pain begets pain. Look, if you think your entire life, for decades spent and decades to come, boils down to "surpress all emotion and be human footstool" or "hurt everyone and everything around me in wild aggression", then you're *fucked* both ways because **the other voice never goes away, and wasn't the problem in the first place**. No one is making you do anything (usually), and this mythmaking surrounding a need for penance and a need for protest only strangles ones ability to parse reality. They are the Scorpion and the Frog both - which is to say they are neither, and pretending otherwise is what keeps eating them alive.

Hey, remember when Vriska burnt out and had depressed consolation flirts with Meenah who was also rather burnt out? Great. Good talk. Place that mentally next to Dave Strider's mental breakdown, and Karkat's for flavour. We all on the same page?

Steal an aspect to rewrite it in your favour, while **exploiting** another for those around you - easy on their own, but tricky to synergize. Thieves and Knights may have their hard snaps when they're utterly sick of themselves, but their twin impulses manifest and misfire constantly no matter what they do. Redoubling the earlier discussed dynamic with Witches/Seers, seeing others as "more stable/cohesive", it makes sense why Thieves latch on to others as readily as they're

threated by them; their personal worth is easily substituted by connection, both in more explicitly Knight-y brotherhood and threadbare (yet posessive) connections to famous or fictional figures. Course, if they're putting all their eggs in their primary aspect, then the opposed one only manifests as **exploiting** a negative in others: the same reflex Knights have to put people on a pedestal is misfired to shove them into the ground - *and* to reinforce bonds so they won't leave. To keep any company whatsoever, Thieves make themselves useful in a way that must be unique, and Knights are no different: their opposed aspect is often something **stolen** for exclusive control, as a talent they've "got covered" so you don't have to. Knights fret constantly about personal delights, but they already *do* that by rewriting it as one more "responsibility" they're incredibly defensive to give up. These are some wild mental gymnastics around a pretty basic mechanism: help your friends as a specific service, and do what you want if you don't think it's a good idea at the time. All this "I am garbage" or "I have to fight everyone who believes I'm garbage" thought is, fundamentally, optional. All classpect beliefs are fake, but these two really are making things needlessly difficult for themselves - and *even this process of self-hatred* is too easily defended as part of the personal identity they'll fight for.

Karkat's raw thirst for leadership (and John) isn't a distraction, it's a function. In the same way, Dave's organized self-hatred (and webcomic) reflect a very unique approach to the Space aspect; he's not rejecting creativity and choice, he's making his own. In regards to his "I'm not a hero" speech, it's a free-flowing creativity he's using to martyr himself with, and that is...so, so tragically true to life.

I miss them. I don't think I should. Not after what was said, and did, and never apologized for while they tried apologizing for unrelated shit that only highlighted how utterly and hypocritically self-absorbed they were. Just lost in their own little tragedies, stabbing you whenever you try to pull them out, stabbing themselves at other times while thinking that's how you make friends - or god forbid, flirt. They come from similar childhoods best I can figure, but it's the ones who tried to rationalize their abuse that take the bulk of it with them.

Somehow, it's the Thief in my life who wound up the most well-adjusted, and remains one of my closer friends - and they're lightbound, the filthy Vriska-kin.

Thieves care about their friends, and balancing that with their hell-raising is uneasy; they'll burn out, and reigniting that raw passion to face the world and chase their dreams is tricky. The more Knights rely on their immutable worldview, the more fragile it will become to a world that does not give a shit; when it shatters, they crash and burn into a faux-Thiefhood of ugly spite where they try to make everyone hate them as much as they hate themselves. Somewhere, between these two impulses, and inside the individuals that live with them, is the moderation to balance them out - to not pick either narrative of the sinner or slave, but dissolve them to their base elements and alchemize anew. The fact is, Knights are allowed a break - they're also allowed to be annoying, unhelpful, selfish, and probably *should*

without trying to “make it useful” or “stuff it down”. Thieves don’t need to pretend to be any worse than they are; they’re wounded, they know that, but romanticizing it doesn’t heal it and neither does hurting friends. You’re not an everlasting protector of the innocent or a remorseless killer; you can bluff it, get shit done, but you have to know it’s fake first and foremost. Contemplate who you are past your best *and* worst qualities - what you actually want, who you’ve actually got a problem with, and what you really want to be remembered for. Maybe it’s best to take a break from defining yourself as a Thief or Knight...at least, not until you’ve decided what you want to define it - and yourself - as.

Like I said, “Mercenary” is a fun combo, but...yeah. There’s human lives in the mix - and pretty volitile ones. Feels like pre-retcon Vriska is the only one who really figured it out...but maybe I should show more sympathy to Dave. Always rubbed me the wrong way how he pretty much “retired” timehood. It works for him, but...hell, there’s plenty of issues with Homestuck’s later writing.

TIER 3: MIRACLES AND SCIENCE

(THE GRAY BETWEEN GIVING IN AND GIVING UP)

Aspects are beliefs, and most of those are synonymous with “things that make us happy”. The Royals touch of destruction should ideally temper, the Fae most of all, but the difficulties are well documented. Despite this defined skepticism, they’re not actually as practical as they think (which is probably pretty obvious to the people around them). The damaged scraps of their main aspect only highlight what fills the null space; an inverted aspect they believe in *too* much, and an inverted class that keeps them ready for action (if not, strictly speaking, stable). Princes don’t have to be misreable and Bards don’t have to be...Bards, but it means walking back on everything (or at least half of everything) they think they are. It’s equally unfamiliar for the Fae, but they really do have more in common than they think, and there’s possibility past the insult.

All is equal; nothing can be **created** without being **destroyed**, and vice versa.

MAIDS AND BARDS are, somehow, staggeringly, the same class. While their reputations can seem irreconcilable, and it remains one of the most truly *segmented* inversions, the twin impulses are always present - just, you know, not really “balanced”. The Maid impulse is a wellspring of self-assurance and self-sufficiency, and Bards can sit comfortably (probably too comfortably) on this background proccess while their actual primary aspect fails to get off the ground. Of course, Bards do have that aformentioned super-dedicated niche of

willpower and followthrough - it's just not their main interest compared to these unsubstantiated hypotheticals and tangents. Maids do this too, but it's harder to recognize from all that impulsive spirit barreling them forward; moments of wild wonder and slippery fascinations, glimpsing something past preconceptions, all before sliding back rigid routines. They're both too comfortable with who they are, where a Bard's active side rarely strays past it's essentials as a personal motive, and a Maid's passive side rarely evolves into anything besides "aimless and unproductive heckling". Still, no matter how opposed, is this any different than Pages and Rogues? It's easy to let people off the hook, but harder to do it for yourself; easy to see how things could be better, but harder to get loud and force it to happen. We are playing with much higher stakes of course, but a Maids will work themselves to death if they don't find *substance* in the world outside...and, you know, Bards could stand to put their productivity on offer, instead of always stargazing.

Gamzee being a Maid of Hope really tracks, even at his most wrathful moments; Destroyers overall better display their inverted aspect, like I've been saying. For Maids, I have the benefit of knowing one (for sure, anyways, but I do have guesses on an aunt of mine). Maid of Light, but you bet your ass she has some *weird* guesses sometimes. Sometimes that's making narratives where there are none, and sometimes it's openly fucking around with the unknown without any pretenses - there's a Bard in there, and they do synergize decently well. You want anything more, go watch Peridot's arc from Steven Universe (my money's on Mind/Heart).

Creating instances of your aspect is hard to do without **destroying** the other one other people hold up, using the Maid impulse as a monster truck engine and the Bard impulse as a battering ram. Now obviously this is a pretty friggin' well oiled machine for Maids, but we're defining misfire by needless failure states and fighting a perfectly good aspect...which Maids do *alot*. Again, Maids do have a vague outline of what the world is outside their obligations, and who they could be outside of it, but it's not so much slowing down so much as charging full speed in the opposite direction; a Bard's touch in confusion, questions, juggling and discarding what they're having so much trouble trying to grasp. It's fascinating to tear into something and find it's true essance, but it's simpler to just **destroy** it indiscriminately - and whether they admit it or not, Bards don't do much different. Again, it's pretty rare they step up to plate and truly invoke their primary aspect, rather than cheerfully disregard anything not up to their standard. A misfiring Maid impulse really shows the worst side of it; pulling excuses and reassurances out of one's ass, with no practical altruism. Without the neccesity of putting their self-worth in it, Bards **create** their own echo chamber, too easily shielding them from criticism and accountability...and maybe, if we don't show respect and sympathy to the toil of Maids, we can acknowledge they often wind up doing the same thing.

Bard of Mind, one of my oldest friends, always goes “but do you know the REAL me, beyond the LAYERS” kind of talk whenever I try to press him, especially on classpects. At least now I know where it’s coming from, and he’s finally made some progress at appreciating other people’s emotions rather than (only) doubting everyone’s strategies.

You know, Bards are the double-inverse of a Page. Maybe that’s why I’m so irked by them.

Neither class here is in a hurry to change, where figuring themselves out is always a personal quest - one that, hypocritically, stands next to disinterestedly making quick assumptions of those around them. Ironically, invoking the passive side is one of the best ways for Maids to tend to their mental health, finding purpose in doing very little. Also ironically, a Bard’s active side is an excellent way to assist those around them, so long as they’re willing to stop patting themselves on the back and actually fulfill a request thrown their way. There is a balance between aggressively doing everything and aggressively doing nothing, but neither class is likely to find it unless something truly breaks their stride; no matter what endless reserves they can pull personally, it doesn’t *help* anyone if they don’t *listen* to anyone. Independence and self-sufficiency is a great attribute, but solipsism is dangerous in a way that’s too easily seductive. Even if the differing approaches to the aspects don’t line up equally, it’s still important to mix and reconcile them as much as possible; the Bard impulse is *designed* to blend and remix the ideas of others, not just fry them into cinders while obviously not giving a shit what anyone says (even though it can (and does (alot))). Even with this in mind, there’s basically no answer here where they become true “team-players”; Maids work by their own dictated schedule, and Bards still think they could totally blow everyones minds when they find the time. As confusing - or even dangerous - as Bards going nuclear is, surely this is the sign of something pure? Maids frequently clean up everyone else’s messes without addressing the root, where Bards fixate on it (or are at least trying to) without putting their money where their mouth is; is the **creative** impulse as held back as the **destructive** impulse? There’s only one way to find out, and there’s no way it won’t be messy - art should terrify.

I’m not sure what kind of title you could use specifically, but there’s certainly an allure to “Trickster spirit meddling with mortals”, and the inhuman arcane nature of clowns. Maybe just “Trickster”? I know it’s a loaded term in Homestuck’s lexicon, but we can afford a few deviations. Ugh, pick whatever name you want - and that goes for friends of Maids and Bards moreso, since they’re more likely to read this.

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PRINCES AND SYLPHS actually make significantly more sense than the previously discussed link, both initially and in depth. Poor with boundries, very defensive, weird assumption of being “in charge” of everyone else, needlessly competitive and petty, most critical in areas they’re nervous to risk attempting, tendency to track people down

days after an argument to get the last word in...it's pretty much the exact same laundry list of bad habits. Sure, their attitudes and focus are in different areas, but the fragile idealism and fragile cynicism aren't as different as they think (the keyword is fragile). It's hard to be everyone's best friend when you overthink it as "a job", and worse when that "job" is the only distraction from a volitile ennui at who the hell you're supposed to be and where you fit into the world. Sylphs at least have a "functional" default, where their active side can be ignored as much as possible and misfires can be minimized...but Princes are who they are, warts and all, precisely for having all that darkness at the forefront. In fact, Princes invert regularly over the course of their lives, often invoking their opposed aspect more than their primary one, struggling to make *either* work. There's a lot to get into here, and its for people who take alot of pride is having their shit sorted all by themselves without any help...but if it can be knocked over by anything, is it worth protecting? You want to help everyone, but you don't know how to help yourself, and it's scary when it feels like someone is trying to take control of your last scrap of self. Look, it's not impossible to synergize the two sides, but they need to be untangled from the psychological rat's nest of paranoid power-keg. If that hurts to hear, stop making it true.

Eridan and Dirk having a Rage and Mind side should be no surprise given their words and actions. Aranea's relationship with irrelevancy is under her strict jurisdiction; when new information threatened it, she could no longer allow it. Much the same with Kanaya, who, besides some paticular ideas of "what's gotta happen", rather famously defied death as a vampire. It's Aradia who gave herself more time in the hourglass, more of a rush of being alive - it's Kanaya who broke the hourglass, rejecting its sanctity and meaning.

The less I say about my mother the better. I will say, at least, that Sylphs and Princes are the loudest theists or atheists. The absolute loudest.

To "**destroy** an aspect" is a phrase that makes sense, but still misses the subtleties; you're stuck attacking it because it isn't what you want it to be, and you can't truly annihilate it either. You *want* to chisel it into something great, but perfectionism too easily smashes it to rubble...it just doesn't actually kill it. So what then of **creating** the opposed one, in a passive way meant for everyone? A responsibility, altruistic and unquestioned? See this is easy to understand with Sylphs: **create** a road for everyone else, while showing a personal **destructive** disgust at what stands in its way. Their pride is in the sadistic stranglehold, but they rarely consciously realize that the wreckage left over is *precisely* organized the way they want it to be; their callous off-hand remarks, snide pride, all of it identical to True Princes. On the other hand, Princes are playing a truly miserable game of telephone trying to interpret these impulses: their "responsibility to others" is...the strangled scraps of their primary aspect? Is the corruption and dysfunction they see in others a **creation** of naturally plotting a course for everyone else, trying to

intervene to an invented evil? If they pull the “happiness is impossible, we must all accept the failure and helplessness that surrounds us” speech, is that just them barely starting to see good in their opposed aspect, but projecting it as universal? Why is even self-destruction meant to be some “way it has to be”? It feels like every Prince reinvention is just a reshuffling of win-states and fail-states, where every misfire is recognized enough to scare them into doing something reckless...but no matter how many times they reshuffle, it’s the same fucking deck. They need to stop thinking no one can understand what they’re going through, or that all that self-loathing is the core of their identity rather than the very predictable result of utterly failing to grasp it.

They’re not monsters. But they’d prefer that, over being called a cliche. I don’t know how they expect to move past that, if they won’t recognize the problems they can’t romanticize. It gets gross. They’re not some tragic byronic hero, they’re just half nurturing caretaker and half easily dissapointed. At least Sylphs accept the first one.

I keep thinking about the whole “I raised myself” Prince childhood. Cause again, Sylphs are...futzy, on details. It’d check out, but we’re not even measuring trauma so much as a child’s rationalizations to it. Would Kanaya have been an outright Prince of Time with a Y chromosome (or whatever troll equivalent)? Is the pressure of serving her caste and being unable to do anything about it something quintessential to her becoming a Sylph of Space? Hussie decides that, but he’s been right about enough things to make me worry about the people in my life, and what made them.

It’s not *new* for Princes to wield their opposed aspect, but it’s too often manipulative; bait, lies, invented evils, invented shelter, whatever accomplishes the task of making people rely on them and submit to their cataclysmic worldview. It’s completely foreign for Sylphs to acknowledge their opposed aspect as something to build up, as something unifying instead of justifying their control. The Prince impulse is a dangerous liability, but it has far more utility than needlessly chasing moral oblivion and settling for abusive hypocrisy - it was *never* about what is destroyed, but what is spared. The undeniable truths, the beauty beneath the rot, the thing that never needed “fixing” in the first place - you know, your fucking self-identity. Sure it’s fragile, but letting it breathe grows it into inner strength; if you hide it, try to feed its sickness with external validation, it just withers and poisons all your kindness. So often, the two classes devolve into a broken narcissist, obsessed with proving an infantile image of superiority. Denying this fearful insignificance only internalizes (and displays) it further, while you try to prove that your “individual special opinions” are the “objective correct way to living”. Here’s a fun tip: good and evil aren’t real, we made them up. There is no correct way to live, but yours never had to be. You can sustain healthy relationships without either of you being dependent. You’re not allowed to *decide* you didn’t hurt someone; some people are unreasonable, but if that’s 99% of the people you meet **that is a red flag and you should reconsider why “you” are the only “sane”**

person you know. If you can't cleanly fall back on who you are, you only push forward into who you aren't, mythologizing the dichotomy into a matter of life and death for everyone around you - and it isn't. It's just you. But maybe the world will keep spinning regardless of you trying to push it or slow it down. Maybe that's okay.

Foreign fairy representative and Princes both fit well into the "could totally pull a coup". Originally I had fancy poetry speeches for here too, but I thought against it. Still...Princes tapping into fairy magic, louder and dangerous in a way that competes with the controlled cantrips of Heirs; there's something to that, some resolution of the implied "arc" of the royal scientist trying to burn away the magical world out of fear. Just as well, give Sylphs cannons and militias, see if we can trust them, right? Maybe? Inversion is healthy, but it's not an obligation, I suppose. Besides, even if we ignore what will or won't go over well, it's just plain easier to say what can't work compared to what might. There's a lesson there, I'm sure, but I'm no Prince. I exploit destruction, and maybe my frustrated obsession is in trying to exploit the destroyers - there's always so much good buried there, but they'd all rather spiral.

The less I go into who's hurt me, the better - probably. If there are any Princes...just find a way forward. Not by burning the past, but by learning from it. It's work. You're going to fuck up and relapse. The trick isn't making sure it doesn't happen, the trick is being okay with getting back up.

TIER 4: HEAVEN AND EARTH
(THE HARDEST BRIDGE TO BUILD)

No, you aren't forgetting anything, don't scroll back to check. Information was omissed, and will continue to be until we have addressed all prerequisite information. Where Tier 3 showed the imbalances present in high intensity inversion, this is a step beyond. A Master's 100% certainty on the shape of contentment is only matched by a 100% certainty in the shape of discontent, and while that translates to an expectation of controlling both, it creates the *wildest* extremes of what someone is capable of...or at least, capable of *justifying*.

As exemplar and patriot, **command**; as invader and pariah, **conquer**.

A consistency among see-saw models is the idea that Lords and Muses balance themselves out. As a paired class, yes - as an inversion, no. It's a damn shame Hussie didn't talk about any other classes (explicitly), but 14 doesn't really balance out evenly, does it? Odd numbered 7, no room for pairs, it should make you suspicious. Admittidly, I missed it. I just kept asking questions, and finally found someone that violated my assumptions while making everything else snap into place. Jesus I was in an insomniac fugue state for like 4 days writing that all down...anyways, we'll get to it. Despite being an information-focused document, a bit of narrative suspense helps build a more usable image, I believe.

LORDS AND...well, what would you call it? A Lord's passive side? Sure, they're self-obsessed by design, but there's something at play here: their mentoring instinct to set people straight, sort their problems, and be acknowledged for their impact, all feel *similar* to the Maid/Bard interplay. An active impulse needs an equally strong passive impulse to balance it out - keyword there being "impulse".

Lords are more than their ego, more than the “idea” of themselves, or else they wouldn’t be capable of the dangerous manipulations we’ve discussed before; silent, cold pragmatism, that has no voice or language. Lords are ***not*** brutally honest when it doesn’t suit them, but the overwhelming presence of their primary impulse can disguise the existence of anything else they’re plotting - even to themselves, as we’ve discussed with the very poor lies often employed. Where Mages have unexplained exceptions, Pages have shameful scheming, and Maids have unproductive heckling, Lords have manufactured misrealities - as soon as they learn to do it intentionally, they become some of the most dangerous liars on the fucking planet. This impacts how Lords interact with their opposed aspect - which is to say, without sanctity, hesitation, or care for what was before. Not to **command** with genuine (albeit often selfish and masturbatory) belief, but absolute adaptation, **conquered** in totality. Sure, Lords often try to reshape the world to revolve around them (“Buddy, the REAL YOU would be doing what I like doing, so stop having an opinion”), but that’s still a misfire, ignoring this passive impuse’s merit outside of revolving around the primary. There is potential here, but it should be obvious how difficult it is to hold Lords accountable to their actions. Still...it’s the only road for they themselves to escape their own orbit, even if it’s the same one to drag outsiders into it.

Caliborn. Space aspect. Creativity. Come on, it works for Johnny Silverhand too; that man understood zen and meditation only as it pertained to violent punk rock rebellion, didn’t he? Yes it was a cheap excuse to hook followers and cause chaos, but there is a dynamic, and I’ve known enough real life Lords to say there’s truth to it. We always know what we fight against, don’t we?

MUSES...don’t seem to make much time for themselves, do they? Their mouth is for your voice, their soul is hollowed to make room for yours, etc etc. They build a frightening amount of their identity on who’s in their life, bordering on (and sometimes very much being) obsession. They are not prone to voice or condone what they get out of it, but it *does* seem just-maybe-suspiciously-close to the inverted aspect they’ve otherwise written off. A Prince impulse in a Sylph is diminished, but never dead; much like the associated aspect, the sense of self cannot ever be completely **destroyed**, and thus the struggle rages eternal. Muses seem to have lost that fight and been snuffed out...or did they? A Muse’s sense of self appears **conquered** into a dormant submission - but, again, critically, even if the Muse hasn’t noticed, *not dead.* That voice of cold spite Muses break out is *definately* coming from somewhere, but pinning down everything it is and wants is imperceptible, as off-limits to us as a Muse’s inverted aspect is to them - but even then, there still are shades, both in outbursts and subtle assumptions. It is a Muse’s primary aspect that can so easily overwrite wills like a Lords, but it is doing so while advertising itself as impersonal, which Muses themselves very much

believe; it is a Muse's active side, their inverted aspect, that hides underneath these speeches. It is everything they will take for themselves, everything they stand to gain, in an aspect they so often vilify with the opinions they never say - but shouldn't they? Shouldn't there be some safe environment to let this out without hurting anyone? With how zealous and esoteric Muses are, it's easy to assume they're exaggerating when they must always be kept in line. In truth, even now, it feels fair to say *Muses* still aren't as dangerous as they say. After all, that little voice isn't in the driver's seat...at least, for them.

That Muse of Heart I know always jokes about being "smooth-brained". Maybe a coincidence. She draws some intricate predictions sometimes though - abandons them quickly, doesn't look for a fight, but they're not gone. Just as well, a Muse of Hope I knew (Chinese Christian would you believe it) had alot of seething fury, which she repeatedly expressed penitence over. Believe you me, Muses have bite.

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So what's going on here? Aspects without belief, impulses without classes, wants without frameworks? It's very difficult to describe, and if we jump into it now, it's very easy to get the wrong impression about all of this; if you don't see how it completes the system, you might think it jeapordizes it. That if some people truly *are* so malleable, then we all are, and classes are illusionary, temporary, and pointless. That we alone have it within us to be who we want to be, and anything else can be overcome when we once thought it was all we ever would be.

It's a noble idea. But it's wrong.

We will continue building nobility out of maximizing the effectivness, happiness, and health of the classes; to push their boundries and compulsions and training them to do what we want them to do. We will do this without lying, without shutting our eyes from the world, without cheap consolation that ignores reality instead of fiercly negotiating with it. Classes may be everpresent, but they are not all we are, and its understanding the mechanisms and intricacies that allows us to stretch the immutable as far as it goes. So if we're going to sail into uncharted waters, let's double check that the boat is seaworthy.

DISCREPANCIES

(CLOSE DOESN'T COUNT)

A class is a default, a status quo, a habit. You whittle them down to its essence and it seems trivial, but a modest seed blossoms into an intricate flower - even if it is pretty damn similar to all the other

flowers of its type. Course, there's still only so much you can sum up in a few paragraphs; we adapt to social contexts, we mature, and sometimes we just try really hard to be someone else. Even if the rubberband always snaps back eventually, it can still make it pretty far, and our class impulses can be reinvented or reconciled in a way that makes us unfamiliar to others. For the outliers, for the deviations, for the circumstantial, for the not-yet-relapsed, let's have a lightning round with the usual suspects we've all grown to understand.

Originally I had inversions after disrepencies, but this works better. It's best to get the static information out the gate first, THEN address variables.

Heirs and Pages both want to do good, be there for you, and apply themselves. They also both feel a compulsion to rise to challenges and high stakes, with strong opinions on "What I gotta do". The obvious difference is that Heirs are deft with details to the point of losing themselves in it, where Pages are so intimidated by the scope it's a cliche for them to run with their tail between their legs, begging anyone else to take their place. Obviously, it's not a rule, and working that Rogue impulse can help a Page try to put themselves in the same position as Heirs. Team centerpiece therapist/leader or not, however, doesn't change the endgoal: Pages want to win, Heirs want to fight. While distant, impossible dreams may stay the same, Pages would very much like to be there, and will struggle to keep their spirits up if it feels like they're not making any progress. Heirs live for the proccess, and integrate other wills rather seamlessly; Pages can feel overwhelmed when they're directly identified as someone's anchor, preferring intervention on their own terms. They have a passive side, but they're not a passive class, where compassion has to fit next to static ideas of principle, self-improvement, and showmanship. For Heirs, compassion comes first, and they'll often exempt themselves from going down the road they keep encouraging to others - which is to say, as their chosen win-state, without the open fragility and meekness that defines Pages living by proxy. Besides, if Heirs had the selfish-streak of vanity that Pages did, they wouldn't be so hesitant to call themselves a monarch, would they? If they have pride, it is as the sheepdog - Pages want glitz, glam, glory, superpowers, the works. Trying to share that with others is mostly guilt, as is trying to "earn" to the right to such indulgances.

You know Raimi Spider-Man was a solid Page, but it feels like most iterations lean Heir.

Heirs and Knights are confused only in dry descriptions, and *never* when you put them in the same room together. While they both have bravado to act like everything's fine, it's serving very different purposes; Heirs challenge others, contest opinions, and drop the

docile act when they need to get serious. Knights are always serious, and (besides making them volitile) it highlights their efforts to preserve the status quo. If there are problems, its because people need to be reminded who they are and have their will (real or imagined) be enacted - not *doubted*, let alone course-corrected. It's why Knights are so prone to cracking when someone explicitly says they didn't ask for it - and on that note, it's pretty hard to confuse a Thief and a Mage. Broken Heirs will drift off, but they really don't burn bridges; they have moments of curt and direct confrontation, yes, but not twitchy verbal harassment with low blows and self-loathing.

This is very embarassing to mention but, back during the early days of getting into this, I assumed my brother was a Knight, not an Heir. I mean sure, I had rougher descriptions, contradictory fan theories, limited friends I could poke, but...it nags at me. There's earlier versions of this document that get really emotional at the end of the Knight section - I mean it for him, full stop, said as much, and I feel so stupid I fucked it up. I've internalized this paranoia that I need to be perfect, or else I void my right to speak at all - even then, I've still got early guesses that were dead right, and finding other people as examples and info sources has only made me sharper. Then again, maybe that's all just Page excuse making. I shouldn't have been hasty, where real people's heads are on the line; there's a potential to help as much as hurt with all this. It always feels like it never should have been me to be writing all this. My friends agree with what I write, but rarely what I'm doing - at least those that do say it really helped. I have to try - I want to try. Someone should. But I also know why I believe that.

I did keep working on the Heirs section, and when I got it into a good state, I showed him. I mean LifeHeir seemed pleased enough, but my brother actually had a double-take - some acknowledgement of his secrets and conniptions, of faces he's played when I was never in the room. Even now, I feel so...warm, and fuzzy and acknowledged for that. Still, it caught him off guard, and he's defaulted back to "concerned dismissal" ever since.

He's never going to read this.

Witches and Seers border on complete indistinguishability from each other, as established. There isn't much to go on from a surface element besides who doesn't abandon their speeches (as much), and who's easier to invite to group projects (as much). Seriously, there isn't a smoking gun here, but they're at least very likely to entertain talks of internet personality systems...so, try asking them directly? You just have to sort which aspect they consider "fun ways to organize or understand people" and which is "fun <u>personal</u> distractions". Give it a shot, cause with either being their way to keep ahead of self hatred and ennui, it might do more favours than it first seems.

On a more *spicy* note, Seers rarely seem to think of themselves as romantic interests; if they do hook up with someone, they study and analyze them just like everyone else. They do think they're probably not a good choice of partner, but that can be a touchy subject they'd rather ignore. By contrast, Witches fetishize it, always with the speeches spilling out of their mouths of how better off the world is without them, and how truly "resolved" they are with a current partner who's tamed/saved them. They couldn't bear the thought of going back into the dating scene, hurting people, they found true love even if no one understands, etc etc blah blah blah blah...

Witches are fun - but they're also very, very, very cliche-ridden.

Witches and Rogues both play things pretty safe most days, and don't make a big deal out of things. Yes, Rogues are protective and respond to trouble, but they also might chicken out, and that can be similar to a Witch's more fickle nature. Both won't have the best idea of who "they" are personally, and won't be in a hurry to have that conversation. As cautious as they both are with people in their circle, it is more noticable how Witches...”fumble” at empathy. Working that Seer impulse is weird for them, and it's not much besides talk - they tend to be most confused if it *does* make people feel better. Rogues are incredibly attentive to friends in trouble, and are going to blame themselves if there's anything they couldn't do to help. If Witches blame themselves for anything, it's going to be either "immutable" or long in the past; distractions to help friends feel better will be much more take-it-or-leave-it. If nothing else, Rogues don't have the Witch-Spiral-Speech(tm) - one day, they're just gone.

Mages and Maids are both active, distant, and not used to second guessing things - which can sometimes blur the line a little. This confusion is cleared up not in conversation, but in action: Prospit Maids will happily tell you they'd prefer to be left alone and work on something important for you, whereas Prospit Mages will happily display how much they want to be left alone and won't tell you what they're working on because it doesn't concern you. Prospit Maids take people with them where Prospit Mages are cheerfully solitary; Derse Maids are immutably *relentless*, compared to the more wandering Derse Mages. Ultimately, Mages can more readily own up to doing only what they want and take a nap, whereas any Maid has trouble remembering no one's forcing them to do anything; what they consider to be "stable" will shatter every now and again, but you really can't break a Mage's stride even if you cut off one of their limbs. Mages might flirt with ruthlessness if there is a legitimate threat (real or imagined) to a friend, but it's an exception that proves the rule - and Maids are a little less protective anyways, with a Bard instinct shining through.

And somehow, Pages are inbetween them. You know after decades of working on it, I feel I've found my groove and that I can live as a true middle-ground between Mages and Maids, but it's still *weird*. It's not that way by default, so is my ability to better integrate the wills of others a choice or an outlier? There's this instability to all Tier 2's that Tier 3's resolve by not recognizing the imbalance...I think. Ask a neurologist. Or don't, they'll probably think you're crazy.

Mages and Pages are seperated by a single notch, though Prospits hold no similar surface traits (despite a clear comparison in approach). Derse variants, however, are more easily conflated - both unsure of their place in the world, both wanting to do more, both wanting to help people, both likely to apologize for things they shouldn't, both possible to be pushed around by people who appear to

know better than them (and rarely do, if they're resorting to pushes). A Page's ennui and frantic people-pleasing is often overbearing however, whereas even the most codependent Mage isn't going to be one insult away from an anxiety attack 24/7. Crucially, a Page's realization will still incorporate their need to be a savior; a Derse Mage's realization (and again, a Prospit Mage's starting point) will often be "I did what I wanted to do and no longer owe the world anything, bye", much to the dissapointment of others who think their friend is still underselling themselves - and they might be, but they're still *content* with it. Derse Mages can be endearing (even downright eccentric) dorks, but there is no incentive or fuel to go nuclear.

A Mage buddy of mine was a bit put off when I first told him my conclusion on our relation; he's had lots of people like me in his life, and I guess it felt a bit unpleasant. Like realizing you're crush is related to you or something. It's important to recognize that commonality though, as Mages can offer "their" way of living in much the same function - though it's more of an aquired taste.

I think it's also important to not push Mages into Page goals, or think a Page is going to settle and do something safe. The more you confuse people who think they're no good, and people who don't care, the more damage is done. It's important to recognize people for who they are AND who they could be, without simply projecting or assuming everyone is the same. They're not. We're not. I hope I can be forgiven for mistakes I've made in trying to categorize what I believe to be immutable.

Pages and Seers can get a little futzy if Pages have enough confidence to stop freaking out about themselves, but not so much that they'll openly chase accountability. Living by a code and structure, along with all the depersonalizing with mentioned, will mimic certain attributes of a Seer's clinical approach...but it certainly won't hold back the underlying lust for heroics, the "mutually beneficial" arrangements leaning selfish, and the Rogue touch of bending their words to try and help everybody (however they define "help"). Seers do have biases and wants, but they're as muffled and inconsequential as possible, which is why they have their reputation. Still, no matter who they are at their best and worst, Pages will often incorporate this mini-archetype if they think it'll help them reach people. Trying to chase verbose neutrality helps them get their points across without *explicitly appearing* as though it's personal, and helps sidestep the everpresent anxiety that they need to justify the right to be themselves. After all, they are but a humble servant, only here to help you be the best you can be - and that's how they get you. This is a cry for help.

Seers and Muses both don't do very much, focusing on the stories of others with a hands-off approach that's more talk than action - though, Seers are more likely to *suggest* action in others. Despite this disparate difference in intensity, they do both give off an air of certainty with their speeches and social placement, but there's still things you can track. For one, Seers know where there's gaps in their

knowledge, and while they're hesitant to admit it, that means knowing they don't know everything. Just because they "expected" certain outcomes doesn't mean they weren't juggling several other possibilities, and they adapt quickly to new information; being dead wrong is a temporary setback, and they have no pride to lose in admitting that professionally. Muses survive not with moderation, but with esotericism and faith in principle: they're often so poetic and high-minded that it's difficult to argue with them on a practical level, and most aren't *interested* in practicality as is. Isolation helps their dogma go unchallenged, while they're always keen to "what has to be done" and "shared responsibility" or the ever classic "this is what's best for you/your friends". On the occasions they do take direct involvement, most aren't prepared for an argument, with Derse Muses likely to scatter and Prospit Muses more likely to go cold. Self-destruction is consistant, but a half-Witch's sass always either downplays or obfuscates such thoughts - Muses might not want to bother anyone, but their downward spirals are a formal martydom.

I know Sapphire from Steven Universe is literally a prophetic oracle, but she doesn't track as a Seer. Doubly so given behind-the-scenes info of who she's supposed to represent, though I've made a point to avoid real people whenever possible.

Witches and Maids do actually blur a little as Prospits, where an easy going presentation can hide that Maids are not easy going at all. Dedicated hobbyists, but who's doing it for the hobbies and who for the dedication? What's a Witch's irreverancy, and what's a half-Bard's disinterest? Put them under some duress (or, more compassionately, pay attention when it happens) and it's best to look at who toughs through problems the simplest and most direct way; I ain't saying Witches can't buckle down and fight, but they do fight *smarter* and not *harder*. Maids are stubborn powerhouses, and overwriting reality for daring to offend their principles is their fucking jam.

Aradia and Damara are a defined contrast, but Hussie clearly figured *someone* needed reminding on what a Maid's habits are.

Heirs and Maids aren't so much a comparison as they are a mistake. I mean a Maid trying to work with people is good, and an Heir having more faith in manifesting their will is also good. It's just...I mean it's much more unlikely an Heir will try, first off, since the slow and subtle proccess always gives them the most dopamine compared to rushing anything along. The thing is, a Maid trying to stuff down their impatience completely and play it slow is *agonizing*. Disagreeing with others has to be as high octane as their regular self - i.e, Bards. The engine was not built to run in first gear, and where Maids hit a familiar burnout by taking on too much, they're *torn apart existentially* if they try to keep filtering their instincts. Again, stubborn powerhouses, but it's a doomed effort to be stubborn against

one’s own stubbon nature. If people don’t want what a Maid is selling, it’s probably best to focus on what they can do alone; it will be enough for them, and they can find where that intersects with others later.

Knowing an actual Heir of Life, it’s funnier watching Jane ruin herself trying to remedy her broken world and broken team. I can’t help but feel my pal would just roll his sleeves up and feel alive trying to fix Dirk, Jake, and Roxy, you know? Jesus, knowing him, he might’ve actually found a way.

Maids are one of the more popular archetypes for heroines. I get it. Part of me wishes we got more variety. Damn it all, maybe Bards should get some encouragement.

Knights and Sylphs aren’t off by much, which makes them harder to seperate than Maids and Pages...though the trick is still probably “confidence”. Knights respect other people’s wishes too much for their own good, while silently (or, sometimes, loudly) aware of how that gets in their way; Sylphs live for other people, and “getting in their way” is usually in regards to them trying to decide people’s lives for them. Sylphs don’t take orders, not really, and even a recognized and reconciled Prince impulse is still going to fire up situationally.

Muses and Rogues are the most figuratively passive class and the most literally passive class respectively. They’re poor at self-preservation, empathetically attentive, and try not to call attention to themselves, but the ways they do both are at least squarely unique. Even though Derse Muses temper theirs with self-deprication, both breeds of Muse live by their place in the universe, and soothing others with assurances that things will work out, or perhaps already have. In contrast, Rogues are protective, and the nature of that protection inherently means rebellion and argument; there are right and wrong answers, justifiable retaliations, a world where good has to be protected lest it be snuffed out. Even when it comes to evading praise and being pulled in every direciton at once, Rogues *have objections to that*, because there is a central direction and state they’d prefer; they’re on nearly opposite sides of the system for a reason after all, and the inversions only paint a clearer picture. No matter how Rogues try to bottle up the Page voice at the back of their throat, it is a righteous indignation, naturally gravitating to increasingly cohesive justifications. A Muse’s personal voice is rather openly blunt, crass, or even vile; whatever its covered by shame or held as a threat, it’s still squarely different.

Honestly one of the comparisons I have the trickiest time parsing, if only because it’s harder to interpret the surface stuff. You really, really do have to look for action, and sometimes all you’ve got is that Muses will say they’re nothing and Rogues will say they’re not sure what they are - again, a Master’s certainty.

Muses and Pages might actually make a bit more sense, given that we’re talking about attuning to something greater and grander. Given their similarities of hero worship and wounded confidence, you can

wind up with some very apt comparisons, even in regards to their unpleasant habits of guilt tripping others as easily (or at least, readily) as they're guilt tripped themselves. Course, Muses command ideas with the *expectation* they should, and it's not as prideless as they think it is; they're trying to skip the argument (and collapse if they can't), whereas Pages are argumentative little bastards. Toil, effort, glory, and a balance between practicality and dogma is the core dream to chase, which is a pretty hard contrast to Muses who either aren't doing anything or won't admit they are. I mean they're not really chasing dreams anyways - they live in one made for everyone else, and personal wants are indefensible no matter how much they've supposedly "earned" it. It's a sharp contrast to the personal meritocracy of Pages, where the finish line is always glinting in their eyes.

Witches and Lords should seem pretty gosh darned differentiated, but there is a blip of communication that could be poked at: whether **commanding** or **changing**, they're both classes who don't overthink their primary aspect, to the point it becomes synonymous with "what they currently want". Hell, it's not *past* a Lord to hit enough self awareness to realize they're not actually the center of the universe, and it wouldn't hurt them to take a more playful approach anyways. Just doesn't change that they're still Lords, with way too much weight to swing around; how they position themselves to others, how they tackle problems, how they handle rejection, all of these are pretty clear tells. Witches might cause some real damage sometime, but it's never got the personal signature of Lords - when it's spite and not subjugation, they're more likely to resemble Thieves.

More interesting is the dynamic between them. SpaceWitch was talking about an ex-boyfriend of hers (yes, her father was also a Lord, she is perfectly at peace with her brain being fucked up), and got into detail about her own experiences and the Witches in her life. The way she figures it, a Lord's single strength is really appealing, as a single dependable connection. I mean I've seen lots of Witches build "alliances" if you can call it that. Witches and Lords flock to one another, really, forming these codependent mutual lies of "helpless prize" and "invincible savior". While I won't (explicitly) say Witches are always smarter, Spacewitch and I are agreed this is a learning experience: Lords are built on falsehoods, and will either take Witches down in a spiral, or deviously manipulate the part of them that so desperately *wants* a hero-boyfriend. Lords without self-aware humility inevitably let people down, but they talk so much they might convince you they didn't for awhile. Witches aren't huge on facts, but that's a preference; they're not stupid. The ones I know are some of the smartest people in my life.

A hundred stories of the girls who dates jerks, never able to give a good reason for it. It comes from somewhere. Just taught me to stop chasing Witches.

Witches and Thieves are a notch off, but it's easy to forget that since Witches don't see a point in openly identifying as an asshole. The thing is, sometimes, they will openly *be* one; toying with people because they can, wearing their cruelest mask, and burning bridges explicitly rather than implicitly. These are engorged states of

aformentioned underlying preconceptions: that the colour of their soul is as an abberation, a manipulator, an immutable poison that will let everyone down. It's not often this will be their first foot forward, but it's not never either, and these phases of an individual's projected persona will (ironically) borrow from the Thief toolset. Before we identify the most caustic Witches, we should acknowledge that the line is only blurred from one side; Thieves don't *like* minimizing damage, where even trying to write it off is more "justified retaliations" and not "harmless mischief". Their list of sins is advertised and decorated, even if it's not that bad...which should make you all the more concerned of any Witch who can manage the same output.

This was a fun topic for me and SpaceWitch. She sent me a scene from Lost in Translation as homework. I get what she means - Witches off the rails.

So, even if we're not discussing Definately-Thieves, how do we sort out the Maybe-Thieves muddying the waters? Rude, callous, spiteful, violent, leaning on people while staying all kinds of prickly, what's the tell? The answer isn't to look at the mask (i.e. active impulse) but what's underneath; Witches-Gone-Wild and Bog-Standard-Thieves are not rebelling against the world, but their *perception* of it. Pry past the bluster, and there's either someone flatly ignoring Seer duties, or someone struggling to lash back at Knighthood's demands. Thieves are defined by the double-think of breaking percieved chains while seeking validation (disapproval counts) of others, often pretty loud on how people "should and shouldn't react", always with shades of nervousness towards potential rejection. This breed of Witch is arranging their own active and passive dichotomy in the same fashion, but the percieved rebellion is against polite pretense, and the misfired fulfillment is simply being a more unpleasant example of Seer question-poking. The world is still blameless, it just isn't beautiful; it's a mediocre garbage fire not worth getting worked up over, even though it's still a Seer's eyes that can articulate that vision. In many ways, this makes Witches more dangerous, where the lack of confidence needed for upkeep or guilt to stuff down allows for years of callous curiosity and disinterested drifting. Thieves *break* into Knights, but Witches can easily lose track of where the lines are, tainting future reforms with the idea that "nothing truly changed". Witches are (still) never as bad as they think they are - but at their worst, all that means is that cruelty like this really was just an excursion, and not "the real me".

I know there's Damara, and that's a great example, but...I've heard too many stories from Spacewitch. It stings sometimes. We're on the same wavelength, but still from different ends. I know the harm she's done in the past, and I appreciate her telling me, I just...

There's a Seer of Time in her. There's a romance for death. Romance for chaos. Romance for suicide - not now, just "eventually, after a long life". It hurts to hear, especially

since it reminds me of my own guilty language in my dark moments - and hey, she shakes *me* out of it, right?

I just can't say that isn't fully realizing both sides of herself - I'm using the classpect system to promote healthy lifestyles, but it's not something that guarantees it, let alone sanctifies my idea of "healthy". I can't say for sure 100% there's a better version of her out there, that wouldn't think those things. I can't say I'm not selfish for wanting her to stick around. There just isn't a damn thing I can do to stop her. Alot of the time, that's kinda beautiful. Maybe this is too, from a certain angle, but I'm not in a hurry to get there.

Thieves and Pages are both trying to "fix" themselves into bigger people, hoping to support their friends as much as seize power - even then, both classes feel squeamish if they're in charge of more than they personally feel they deserve. Now the obvious thing to look for is one constantly stepping on toes for sport, and the other trying desperately to make everyone happy - which bizarrely makes Thieves the more trustworthy ones. They have trouble sitting on secrets, and love to be the first one to make reveals, including "I screwed you over, watcha' gonna' do about it?". Pages are the long-term decievers, and when their Rogue impulse is as bent as it gets, they can be very dangerous. They'll encourage everyone to underestimate them, displace their intent through "mutually-beneficial-agreements", and screw over whoever they can justify...which, isn't actually everyone. Malevolent Pages can only imitate the impression of true ruthlessness; their half-and-half lucidity makes them great schemers, but sickened by their own hypocrises. Stretching the truth only highlights they'd rather not lie at all, and pretending to help easily trips into *actually* helping, even if they thought - or hoped - they were too far gone. This isn't to say some "heart of gold" redeems their actions, only to address the lack of commitment from someone who still has more in common with Maids than Thieves. In fact, if Pages are imitating not the *reputation* of Thieves, but the *attitude*, they're probably doing a helluva' lot better for themselves in terms of confidence, competency, and contentedness. At that point, the tell is a habit of angrily telling people "You're doing a horrible job trying to hurt me, what you should really do is [completely genuine instructions on how to hurt the Page]" - which certainly identifies the "Servant" class.

Saul Goodman from Breaking Bad/BCS is probably the best example of a scheming Page, and Moxxie of Helluva Boss is a good example of "snarky but meaning well". Forgive me if the true north of self-interest in my Pagey heart makes me a bit hesitant to go any further on awful shit I've done, and sincerely hope to do less of.

Thieves and Lords can both be sadistic assholes, but that isn't a class itself, is it? Dersites blur the line the most, and Prospits might have similar excuses, but it's not as complicated as it might seem. Lords posture themselves with a sense of belonging, and anyone they step on either A) Deserved it, or B) Has no sense of humor to funny jokes <u>that could easily be considered assault</u>. It's not like Thieves

won’t engage in this kind of abuse, try to play it off or justify it, but...we’ve established what’s going through their heads. While they both may see their behavior as a response to traumatic childhoods, Thieves came out with a piece missing, and Lords decided they were the universe’s missing piece. Unworthiness is a hard contrast to unwarranted worthiness, and the dichotomy of the Thief/Knight conflict has nothing to do with how Lords interact with the world, and what keeps them up at night - if anything.

My brain won’t stop imagining Biff Tannen as I write this.

Lords and Bards don’t have much overlap as Prospits, but Derse ones have similar methods. Both will be loud and willfully irritating (mostly in their youth), but try to isolate Lords in both anger and initiative: Derse Bards are, even as pariahs, a passive class. They orient themselves around others, prefering to needle them with no rush in what they bring to the table. Lords are loud and clear in how they see the world and what they stand for, even with rudeness and detachment; Derse Lords might play along for a bit, but they won’t turn down an opportunity to show strength and snap back at critics. Lords have a strong center, but it’s at the forefront of their thoughts, demanding certain conditions and boundries (and routinely straight up lying). A Bard’s neglected Maid instincts are still dutifully resiliant despite hiding in the back of their head, making for thick skin that doesn’t sacrifice flexibility. Like a seal. Or something.

If you’re watching a movie and there’s the leader bully with the sidekick bully who goes “Yeah, what he said!”, you’re probably looking at a Derse Lord/Derse Bard partnership. I’ve seen it in practice once, though most Lords I grew up with worked alone.

Knights and Rogues will do their best to stick it out for others, but Knights kinda...“slather” people in good vibes and encouragement, whereas Rogues know that you have to break bones to re-align them; even Derse Knights get all gooey and sentimental when they’re not being a jackass. Knights have strict procedure that will help everyone except themselves; Rogues have personal-yet-vague guidelines that will help everyone and sometimes maybe themselves. All of this is besides the point that both varieties of Knights are rather loud in loyalties and worship, where Rogues are hesitant with affection when they don’t want to take up people’s time.

Witches and Sylphs may ocassionally meet the same surface traits of “cheery, but snippy”. Sylphs have a lot of energy even when they’re trying to be there for everyone else, and a Witch’s wandering downplays their signature as an active class. So they might both start group projects, or get really excited out of nowhere, and nurse a noticable but not prioritized collection of sour thoughts about themselves. Stress test it: Witches wander away if the heat goes up,

but Sylphs always dig in and show the Princey side to any kind of challenge waved in their face (real or imagined). Witches don't have a damn thing to prove to anyone, and that makes sociability a choice and not a directive.

If a Witch pouts and whines, it's part of a bit. If a Sylph does, they're legitimately immature and have a terrible abiltiy to negotiate.

Lords and Knights have fundamentally incongruent DNA, but alot of surface details that match: propping people up, intense bravado, hard work, not listening to people who don't want their help, etc. While the sense of heirarchy is a good sign, it's not universal: "defused" Lords get better and better at putting others first without needing to prove their ego (which was never going to fade away anyways), while Knights can twist their bravado into an *alarming* amount of aggressive boasting. I mean Knights just want to help their friends with stability and success, and achieving that via verbal harassment is a natural (<u>but not stable</u>) synthesis of the Thief/Knight impulses. Of course, this still differs from a Lord's bravado, where schisms stem from a Lord's endlessly reassured state of being versus the rest of the world; Faux-Lord Knights are prickly, competitive, and very aware the world does not revolve around them. Just as well, Faux-Knight Lords only laugh at themselves in ways they agree to, or from someone they have a huge amount of trust in - which might be no one, or subject to change at whim. Both can languish, but Knights tend to attack the root of themselves, where even reasonable Lords veer to scapegoats and excuses; they're never in a hurry to say *they* were the deciding failure, where a half-Thief is still too eager to take blame. At their signature level of volume, Lords try to know someone better than they know themselves (which is to say, overpower and overwrite the wills of others), but while Knights can have romanticized images of friends, they need those preconceptions to be *static* so they can hold on to them. The problem with Knights is needless sacrifice, and the problem with Lords is that they haven't actually sacrificed anything in the first place.

Karkat was loud, but Karkat was also Karkat - there is no one he hated more than himself, and that was not a well-kept secret. Dave was drawing from a different source, but, I've known Derse Knights who up the bravado to dangerous levels. They still hate themselves, it's just slightly harder to tell.

Knights and Pages are paired, but both can be wound up so tight that you might not be sure if they're a lowballing Page holding back potential, or a *particularly* dysfunctional Knight who's failing to keep their armor up. Both will idolize people, but Pages often do so while taking notes, seeing traits they wish they had and encouraging advice they should probably take themselves; Knights often don't *want* the praise they give other people, "serving" without "belonging". Personal

gripes always go through the active component first after all, regardless of what class we're talking about - and despite *being* an active class, Pages frequently flounder when it comes to confrontation. At their lowest, other people will set a Page's own rules to life for them, making them punching bags and human footstools. At middling confidence they have outbursts and breaking points, which they often aren't sure how to (or if they *should*) justify; frequently tiptoing around subjects, or trying to avoid people. A confident (or overconfident) Page will have the guts to tell people off, but it remains within a moral framework of cause/effect, crossed boundries, and karma. Doesn't matter if it makes sense or not, it still requires active upkeep for the Page not to collapse into old habits. A Knight's temper is far more wild, far more rude. Ultimately, you're trying to distinguish unapologetically self-centered, and overapologetically self-centered.

Both can wind up as "nice guys", if you're wondering. Hopefully it's just a phase.

Knights and Bards both blur loyalty with obstinance, especially in the case of Derse variants. Even Knights can be fickle about when a situation is actually serious, holding off their solemn-protector shtick to misfire the Thief impulse into blind harassment with no pride or profit. They can employ the same Thief habit of downplaying transgressions as "Not actually a big deal the more I think about it", which rhymes with a Bard's invented excuses as soon as they're called out on something. Of course, Knights aim this more in "You aren't supposed to be mad", calling attention to their static ideas of people, law, and their role as the outsider, where Bards are very content with their place in the universe - so long as it's in earshot. Failing that, Knights being pissed off is the same spite and persecution we've gone over, where a Bard showing temper is...a very different animal. As rare as it is to happen, a properly riled up Bard swings wild at the world and the people who don't see it all *clearly*, pushing their long postponed revolution as something that Needs To Happen Now Or So Fucking Help Me. Knights might burn bridges, but Bards will nuke the ground they're standing on if the call for a defiant statement to shock society has overtaken them. Expect a half apology that leaves the door open to go wild again someday, compared to a Knight's flat answers of "I'm a failure" or "Fuck you guys".

Like I said, I've seen some shit, and it keeps Gamzee in perspective. Also like I said, Bards in starring roles are hard to find...but it's hard to play the detective in Disco Elysium as anything else. Spacebound, as I figure.

Bards and Heirs are only up for confusion in Prospits - no Derse Heir is going to harass people like a Derse Bard will. Both are going to be cool under pressure, and both will be around for a conversation where they'll try to help...but Heirs are much better at doing all this without

being noticed, and without being obnoxious. Even if an Heir gets too argumentative, there's a more defined direction, where pissing people off might be necessary but never a victory itself. Bards are simply too satisfied with themselves, either ignoring or downplaying disapproval. Even if a Bard can step up to plate as a proper peacekeeper, they'll have to overcome their tone-deaf attitude and refusal to comprimise or capitulate; they might *think* they're inspiring you with compassion, even if you're clearly (and audibly) unimpressed. If they're passionate or in distress, it might be a cold shower to realize how often people have been rolling their eyes at them - even then, cause and effect do not always line up in a way that promotes self-improvement. Jesters are close to the throne, but they aren't replacements,

...though, to be fair, we've `(which is to say "I've")` been so harsh on Bards because they never try to be anything else. Look, maybe you can't truly "confuse" the two, but trying to act more like an Heir is a step in the right direction. It's a sign they actually want to stand up for their beliefs, try to listen to people, to do *better*, to do *more.* Just know your limits, and be careful about promising to be there for people if you know you won't, because that hurts worse than promising nothing in the first place. It doesn't mean you shouldn't try, though - Maids are known for redefining the impossible, and all that's still at your disposal, isn't it?

Pages and Lords have a very disparate median in terms of attitude, but they both want fundamentally the same thing: to live in accordance with virtue, to rally virtue under their voice (implicitly or explicitly), and to personally exhibit those virtues in a way that helps people and makes themselves feel special. Hell, narrow down sway and aspect, and they usually want strikingly similar attributes and accolades...but, Pages are who they are because they realize the sheer lunacy of what their minds zero in on. Even overcoming that with confidence, they *also* recognize that their way of thinking is an outlier, and try to accommodate others. They fixate on what's in the way, reasons they shouldn't, and reluctantly try to understand why the world is the way it is and not the way they want it to be. Lords, however, only see what's in the way, and can even mess that up if their glasses get so rosey they can't see anything. Of course, these aren't moral judgements: there are Pages who are so manipulative that they won't *value* what's in the way, only using the Rogue side to pull people over without humoring a real argument, just as much as there are Lords who live honestly to support their friends. As much as it's important to distinguish the two, it's more important to illustrate that **classes are not innately better or worse than any other class, and none of them define how far we'll reach or how much we'll achieve**. Pages don't "promote" into Lords just because they

found themselves, and vice versa; they both just need to grow up, and untangle themselves from the idea of themselves.

We're measuring intensity. Hussie already shared his words on who the "most powerful class is", and I hope to pull enough of my weight and make any of that true. Besides, "power" doesn't mean well-intentioned, clever, diplomatic, resourceful, or any of that. You want a charismatic force in the room, a contagious beacon of belief, then yeah, Pages can *eventually, maybe, optionally* be all of that even better than Lords start out as. Pages are infamous for shame and cowardice, but the shame for shame pushes them to improve and stop wasting everyone's time, to stop being a burden or slow down on the road to be that hero in their heads. Lords have a bad habit of just blaming things around them when life gets more complicated than something they're not immediately good at, and even overcoming that still means they won't reach further if they already have what they want. Lords never run out of fuel, Pages have moments where they'll burn hotter than anything, and maturing still won't allow them to imitate each other's talents wholesale.

Pages and Lords are natural born enemies, really. I mean, one defaults to seeing themselves stuck in an unwinnable race, and the other thinks they're entitled to every gold medal they see - neither has to be familiar with the classpect system to know, on some primal level, they're in the same competition. The self-aggrandizing alpha male, the self-critical beta male, usually fighting over the same girl - and believe me, masculinity almost always plays a part. You know how long it took me to figure myself out because of this bullshit? Lords lord their laurels, and that'll always incite a Page who's been trying their whole life to *earn* the right to gloat. It's invalidating to work so hard for permission to be oneself, and watch as the bullies get everything from luck or being too stupid to notice their failures...but, if Pages aren't careful, they learn the wrong lessons from it. They modulate themselves less, cheat more, chase girls (or whoever) they objectify into social credit, and become everything they hated just because they thought that's how you win. They do it without losing sight of how the world works, of what the world looks like outside their bubble, and that makes them *very* good manipulators.

Pages are more powerful than Lords. We can be so, so much worse.

A Page who can match (or even *exceed*) a Lord's volume is an impressive feat, but it is situational. The proudest boasts, the biggest promises, the most unflinching sympathies, the longest stretches without self-deprication, all of it is still conscious theatre from someone who doesn't believe all their hype - who never could. Intensity is a measure of zealous assumption, not one's capability to be loud and proud. Pages are, even at this point, never going farther then they think they ought to, and haven't outgrown all their awkwardness and uncertainties. This fruition of potential only means that they do not *collapse* into half-Rogue despondency, only elegantly employ it when they deem it appropriate; it's unjust to drown out every voice with your own all the time, and the Rogue's nurturing instinct needs attending too. Yes, Lords also push others up, but they also throw them down when things get touchy, don't they? In truth, there's a case to be made that the same "base amount" of faith is shared between *all* classes, and only the allotment is different. While Pages do not trust themselves as much as Lords, they do have a more stable trust in others; the uncertain volatility of their two sides only encourage self-critical self-improvement. If Pages try to be as selfish as Lords, they wither into the weasels we discussed in "Thieves and Pages"; even if they *do* impulsively scream for justice, the only way they won't backtrack and apologize is if they're 100% certain it's

justifiable in context and content - results demand resolve, resolve demand results. They develop a trust in their instincts that never becomes deluded submission, where "**exploit** your aspect the best it can be" and "**steal** all the practical good possible" finally pay off. This *is* the hero the Page always wanted to be, without being someone they *have* to be - and that's probably the point.

Deku from Macademia is a great example of a Page, sure. If you're not paying attention, you might miss that All-Might is one too. Hell, I've got guesses on Red Riot, and that fucker is Time to a T.

I have more than I would like to admit in common with Caliborn, to the point of scaring myself with what I take pride in. Sometimes, it feels like that'd just be where I'd end up, if my childhood traumas were a little different and encouraged me to trust myself more. I have other people in place to keep me in check when I go too far, and I know I will sometimes. I know I have before, and I know that anything I do won't take it back. Every Page has a skeleton in their closet, something they can't make themselves the victim for, something they can't share. You have to acknowledge it if you want to do anything positive with yourself, otherwise you get increasingly used to lying to yourself in a loop of self-pity. I'm still trying to figure this out. I'm mad I'm still trying to figure this out. I hope some other Page does, because any aspect besides Time *has* to be easier to sell people on - my friends have such little patience for havoc and mayhem, and I still don't think they understand how important it is to me.

So what about Lords looking Pagey? I mean the inner dynamics are the same - serve your gut, mythmake the past, blah blah we all covered this. The question is, what conditions make that impulse present as *under*confident, rather than the iconic swagger? Generally, it seems family dynamics can incentivise different Lord attitudes, where an older sibling or parent establishes a certain pecking order. This only highlights that it was never *superiority* that defines a Lord, but...well, to be blunt, entitlement. No matter how far it's clawed into their flesh, Lords are wearing a mask, but this persona can easily prioritize the underdog sympathy of a victim rather than falling back on it contextually. The passive side (which we will explore later) protects the ego, playing fast and loose with everything around it in the name of justifying hyper-personal heroism and hedonism; again, alot of what was said in "Thieves and Pages" applies even here, but Lords are defined by their lack of internal conflict. The rules to a "correct lifestyle" always follow their current desires, and never need to be *fair* in what they ask of others compared to what they offer; if begging, languishing, and hiding behind bigger voices gets them what they want, then they can get used to that. Of course, this is still rapid-fire short-temper ranting (and lying), which should hopefully isolate which class is which - but on the other hand, what *should* a "fully-realized Lord" look like? If there's anything to learn from Pages, it's in disconnecting this mythologized idea of one's identity from who we actually are, and to learn a little empathy inbetween. After all, there's only so many people they give a shit about, and they don't have much to prove, even to those confidants. Lords don't like to lose, but that

makes it more important they don't turn everything into a competition.

I've met friendly Lords, sure, but not many insecure ones. You hear about them mostly - manchildren who inherited lots of money from their folks, run wild with it, freak out and cry when things get tough. Honest to god, if I have to think of a media example, Jason Brody of Far Cry 3 comes to mind...or Jordon Cross of Hitman 2016. I prefer the former, but I wouldn't want to be in the room with either.

Heirs and Lords are surprisingly harder to tell apart than you might think - *if we're talking about Prospits*. Dersites aren't on the table, as even the most volatile control freak of a Derse Heir isn't anywhere *close* to a Derse Lord, stable or otherwise. But, yes, if we're talking about Prospits, there are potential blurred lines: advice-friend, surprisingly argumentative, keeps the mood optimistic, stable sense of self, lets others lead while chiming in to confidently agree (and/or fix a few things). Most of these, as you may have noticed, are Heir cliches, as it's borderline unthinkable to imagine an Heir who would imitate Lord-specific traits; even moments of intense violence are sporadic, and often in response to very justifiable moral outrages (abusive boyfriends of loved ones are a signature). So, what do we make of Prospit Lords who can imitate a Prospit Heir? Well first off, congratulations, that Lord just avoided a swath of bad habits, measured their instincts fairly to the world around them, and can act as a positive and healthy individual. This is no small feat, and is almost exactly the kind of Lord this document has stressed is possible and desirable...but they aren't Heirs. Hell, if you're not lucky, then they're only faux-Heirs to a few specific people, and you can track down past friends and flames who remember indefensible acts and betrayals of trust. To be a Lord is not a death sentence or punishment, but it is a definable liability of a human personality - we will prioritize those hurt, hurting, and those in danger. They can be good people, but it is so much more work than they often *think* it is.

I have known some eggs. One, particularly, was a very close friend of mine for my first year of high school. Energetic, chummy, supportive, good for brainstorming. Picked me up in my worst moments, let me feel like I had someone in it for the long haul. Had a rough childhood, got a girl teen pregnant, all very mournful things for him to bring up, and I did my best to keep him steady - he hardly seemed like he needed it, but he appreciated me being there, and I appreciated him.

He's also the one who stole 200$ from me, and blamed my MindBard friend. Which I believed at the time. When you experience something like that, reconcile something like that, it forever changes your definition of "genuine". I have become a more suspicious person than I care to admit, but I have never met a Lord who hasn't tried to pull stunts on the same level. I choose to believe, optimistically, that better things are possible. I'm just not going to pretend those aren't slim odds, or offer help in a way that leaves me - or especially anyone reading this - vulnerable.

A Lord imitating an Heir has a few tells. For one, their arguments and corrections are much more common, and often on much smaller concerns that real Heirs would usually let go (but they still have a defined *point*, which is why we're not counting Bards). They're

excitable, yes, and they will try to deify “your” accomplishments, but they do so a little too much: their assurances are a red carpet, too much for too little, special treatment that isn’t fair or earned. Lords are too quick to declare “Fuck ‘em” in regards to human conflicts, where the only line is “friends of the Lord” and “everyone else” - which may be concerning for someone wondering how thin that line is. On another note, while Heirs may drop diplomacy and voice complaints on occasion, Lords are significantly more prone to such fits: they blame their tools, blame the rules, or blame the competition when they’re not immediately good at something - a common Lord trait, but they’re trying to get other people to agree with them now. It makes them difficult to team up with in cooperative efforts, alongside their habit of ignoring orders and following their impulses - you have to work *around* them. Often, words just fail to register, and that goes triple when someone tries to hold them accountable to explicit fuck-ups; denying it is one thing, but there’s a common trait of an eerie silence (maybe a grumble), moving on to a new topic, and then reverting to their most comfortable opinions tomorrow. See, these Lords aren’t going to ever pull the Mage isolation routine, because **they already are inverted**; a Lord playing Heir is invoking their passive side as far as it goes, and while that’s impressive, it can only do so much to bridge the gap. Lords were never a passive class, and while they can be supportive friends, they too often lack the patience to tough through someone else’s crisis or handle it with nuance. It’s not impossible, but it’s effort, not instinct - instincts only a true Heir has.

Like I said, there’s a wonderful narrative of conflict in this double-inverse - of would-be rulers fighting for their people. It’s why I think “King/Queen” should be seen as an optional class name, marking someone who really is the de-facto figurehead of their paticular circle. Lords have the capital (self-assurance), and Heirs have the magic touch (therapist compulsions), but neither are innately - it must be won, and it must be chosen. Both often have the opportunity to take it, to align with it, but Heirs are responsability without interest in power, and Lords are power without interest in responsability. The Baron has to consciously accept squabbles of diplomacy, and the Hero has to consciously accept the full scope of the role they serve, and trust they’ve earned. It is a sign of growth for either class to be that, and harder still to live up to that promise.

Any class could be a King or Queen with that in mind, really. It’s just the right mix of strength in your words, commitment to others, and being accepted by those people. What makes Heirs the “best choice” is how difficult they are to corrupt, falter, or profit from it. They’re sturdy individuals, and that makes titles and thrones feel pointless - which is exactly the kind of person you WANT to put on a throne. If you lust for attention and fame, if you think it’s going to make you feel better, you probably shouldn’t have authority over people. Grow up in a small throne, you might want the big one...but if you actually sit in it, the smallness follows you. Everyone else, the people looking to you, the people you promised to help, they all look bigger. Louder. Like a threat.

One thing leads to another and you start executing peasants.

DISCREPENCIES CONT: PRINCES

(QUIT SQUIRMING)

Princes and literally fucking anything are a major problem. They're constantly trying ("trying") to reinvent themselves, they're inherently oppositional, and they hate people putting words in their mouth...so, we're not off to a great start here. If any of them have made it this far, they've already got some Strong Opinions on everything said; if you know one in your life, trying to broach the subject secondhand will still probably rub them the wrong way. Being a Prince is hard, and hearing that shitty things they've done in the past isn't something they can distance to "younger phases" is something of an existential terror to them. Claiming to be another class is usually code for wishing they *were* another class, and you know what? You're almost there. It's just easier to break the cliches of Princehood if you know what they are, and can admit when you stumble. It's not all bad you know, you can just be a "Good Prince", there is such a thing...but any hesitation felt to trying is alot of the reason you don't hear about those, compared to the horror stories.

There is probably a way to reach out an olive branch and describe Princes in an inarguably accurate way that they'd agree with, but we'd lose the merit of recognizing their most clear and signature sins. Can't we stop trying to tiptoe around subjects and just talk frankly without worrying about their feelings? For once? If they're going to argue, can't we just argue back with the truth? After all, just because you can always come up with an argument doesn't mean you *should* - we are trying to get them to hold their destructive impulses accountable, right? Let's humble some motherfuckers.

I know a Prince who fought me years on whether he was one or not; a big problem was I didn't have a firm enough description. No joke, that helped convince me to write this alot more than I kinda want to admit. Bit selfish, isn't it? I mean "bettering people via conflict and competition" is a valid translation of my classpect, but is it still unbecoming for a Page? Hang on, let me cover my ass...

Princes and Pages hold no related components, but they are both the most outwardly unstable of active classes. They both struggle with who they are, justify cruelty, agonize over their principles, and flirt with absolutes they're nervous to back up. Of course, a few spots of overlap won't change that Pages generally act like Pages, and Princes generally act like Princes; all the depression and ennui in the world doesn't change 80% of their respective personality traits. Even with the most presumptious Pages and the most openly wounded Princes, the damage is in completely different areas, as a Page's impulse drives them to failure and a Prince's impulse drives them to misery - beliefs so titanic they crush the spirit, and beliefs so brittle that the spirit withers. For Pages, obligations are strong enough to last a lifetime (hence why they often incorporate childhood wonders), and attempting to achieve that through proxy or persona are the steps to

finally feeling comfortable in their own skin. Princes, infamously, do not step off the pedestal, where their actual idealism is too *easily* ignored. Pages want to be the perfect representative of their aspect, and Prospit Princes might *think* they want that but it's not a collaborative effort; the words of a hateful stranger can give a Page pause for thought, where even a Prince's closest friends will have difficulty so much as nudging them. Even then, it's Derse Princes who explicitly share dreams of beating their aspect into submission, reigning above it with cold control. It's not...really comparable, if you lay it out like that, and that might be a contributing factor why they'll try not to mention it outside of aformentioned teenage supervillainy. Or if they're drunk.

Princes often strive for dignified positions, and grow out of (transparent) uncertainty. Sometimes, however, they don't really make it past the teenage supervillainy phase; while certain media archetypes match to classpects rather well, "awkward nerd" isn't one of them. You'll have to disentangle some mental stereotypes to sort through them.

Look, just because you're a hopeful dreamer who's weirdly threatened by the people you're trying to help, that doesn't mean your dreams are inherently worse, or that you need to always shit on them; theatricality, self-deprication, and rallying cries are only cliches of Pagehood, and not exclusive. Princes will find life far easier if they learn to laugh at themselves, and reach more people by displaying all those little fragile hopes and dreams. Still, while this shows one way to even out a Prince's rough edges, it's an intentional deviation of instinct rather than a default - a Prince has to let off the gas and stop breaking their ideals, where a Page just has to learn to take responsability and control of their compulsive optimism. This isn't to say Pages can't go off the deep end, but it's certainly a completely different one compared to Princes.

In a perfect world, they'd compliment each other - if a Page ever goes too far, a Prince reels them in. If a Prince is too pessimistic, a Page counters with optimism. The truth is that Pages and Princes are EXCEEDINGLY likely to engage in codependence - Pages are trying to make sense of the world, and might believe someone claiming to have "all the answers". Everytime the Prince falters or feels sullen, the Pages do anything and everything to cheer them up...and anytime the Page starts getting uppity and talking back, Princes put on the pressure, stalling a Page's development. Thieves are the second most likely to try this shit, but they're also not as good at it - even in Homestuck proper, Tavros shook himself loose from Vriska faster than most.

Faster than me, anyways.

Xefros and Dammek were very well put together. I have to wonder how many else went through the same thing, to represent it so clearly. Abusive relationships can take a lot of different forms for alot of people, but there really is just this ugly equation when it comes to Princes and the Pages who carry their capes. And you know what? We take that abuse while they flip their lid at stubbing their toe. Hussie was right: Pages are the strongest class. Most reliable, most useful? Fuck no - but we're strong enough to put up with all of our own shit on top of anyone else. There's a pride in being a Kingmaker.

Princes and Thieves are seperated by a notch - if it were a gradient, we likely wouldn't be talking about it. Now Prospits are pretty easy to

parse: even if those Thieves try to be supportive, they're far too curt in the proccess, and more honest about being self-driven and self-oriented. Thieves gravitate to "look out for number #1" phillosophies, after all...but a *Derse* Prince is capable of making the same claim. Self-aggrandizing "team-asshole" is almost the exclusive mask of Derse Thieves, so what seperates a Prince if they want it? At a surface glance, it's hard to tell; there's a difference in scale, but gloating about being a "survivor" or a "savant" isn't a very clear cut tell. They are responses to their own misfiring inversions, of a world that either restricts or suffocates the "suckers" not smart enough to keep ahead. They will both cave eventually, but sometimes, you don't have time for that.

Really look at Lil' Hal. If you had to *imagine* a Derse Thief of Heart, how far off would he be? The sass alone.

There *is* a catch in how they provide alternatives - which is to say, Princes often don't, with Derse Princes gloating in pessimism and Prospit Princes solemnly tragic, all while Thieves gleefully fight for glory past all the muck. Princes do alot to prove they're "above" their aspect, but as we've repeatedly discussed, that's never *quite* true; it's Thieves who take the selfish approach transparently, never tied up in admitting what they belong to and what they take pride in. Princes will want to skew things their way as much as Thieves, but there really is something unique about wanting to blow it to smithereens first - or at least, saying you are, while sparing what benefits you. Regardless of whether the aspect is written off as "elusive", "poisonous", or "volatile", regardless of whether they'll say out loud "except to me", Princes still instinctively engineer a web of complex multi-layered justifications to shy away from what they have to gain, and how truly personal it always was. Remember, this isn't inevitable predation and evil, this is still just someone very awkward at admitting what they like, and these misdirections are to rig the argument so that no one can take it away from them - because god knows it always feels like it can. The bluster, the excuses, the cries for forgiveness, all of it is just drama to avoid the mundane self-sabotage they put themselves (and anyone around them) through. Here's a straight up fact: Thieves can conditionally share their primary aspect, and so can Princes, even if it's got alot more conditions. Neither has to exclusively rely on the heavy-handedness of their passive side, as that only hurts their relationships and continues the selfish misfires. Sure, there's a fun comparison to make of bandits and politicians, and which one will screw you over honestly, but they *both* do can do *more* than screw people over.

You will never have to slap a Thief in the face and say "Fine, you don't like furries and stupid people and easy modes in video games, will you *shut up about it?".* Princes

frequently don’t add very much to the conversation, but that’s kind of why they’re “destroyers”.

Princes and Knights are identical in the bullet points Princes prefer: trying to help everyone, shoulder burdens, bravado, quiet agendas, pressure to give up, internal feelings of worthlessness. They are, however, two steps removed no matter how you slice it...it’s just that Princes keep trying to narrow those steps. For Prospits, this altruistic attitude is fairly consistant; for Dersites, it’s often what’s left if their swagger and bluster breaks, making it often more a confession rather than a consistent persona - and if it *is* consistent, it’s one that snaps to something else after a year or two. The thing is, they’re still not actual Knights, and not even because their behavior is more conditional; too distant to play lackey, not guilty about liking praise, wanting to socialize but twitchy to slights, managing other people’s lives instead of taking orders, more a caretaker than a servant, thinking they can fix (not just complain about) everyone else’s problems...isn’t this familiar? Some Princes might chalk this up to learning lessons, becoming “wiser” and “more mature” Knights, but there’s a much simpler answer staring them in the face: they’re just depressed Sylphs. Congrats, you discovered inversion.

It’s the most common miscommunication for Princes - you’re allowed to help your friends without deciding its your one and only personality trait. Some of that might be from being double-inverted, but the rest is probably from romance. Hurting yourself to help someone else is...overhyped.

Alright, fine, what’s the harm? Inversion’s healthy, right? Sure, sure, but not if you don’t invert the aspect with it. Princes playing Knights (or, again, depressed-macho-Sylphs) are often still trying to work with their primary aspect, which becomes increasingly fragile after being stretched out as the “universal problem solver” it never was. Princes are stuck accepting only pyrrhic victories in a constant state of stress and unease, rationing out their own carefully approved beliefs which still benefit the Prince whether they realize it or not. On the other hand, a Knight getting uppity and trying to revel in an aspect meant for everyone else is an oil and water situation. Despite pride, Knights think of other people as the exemplars of their aspect, and cannot stabalize the revulsion of pretending otherwise; despite responsibility, Princes will always represent what strengths of their aspect they deem permittable (and those they don’t), struggling to admit when it benefits them and struggling more to make it benefit anyone else. Both too often ignore the solutions available until they crack, thinking they’ve abandoned their principles when they just dusted off the backups. Figure it out, be happy, and don’t fetishize your sadness.

Both the Striders sure, but it’s more common than you think. *Especially* for Princes.

Princes and Sylphs are the same class, congrats, do you want a cookie? Hopefully, a Prince acting more explicitly like a Sylph should be a mark that *they are a Prince*, but I suppose one may suggest they're a true Sylph with only a Prince inverse. Make no mistake, the line never blurs to the point of being indistinguishable: the world's most proudly self-driven Sylph and the world's most optimisticly helpful Prince will, still, always, eternally, young or old, default to their most comfortable state without upkeep. Learn both sides of yourself, invoke as appropriate, but don't get uppity because there is a limit to flattery here - being stuck with these impulses doesn't mean being stuck as all you are, and complaining isn't going to change anything. Get introspective. Reconciling who you are, who you could be, who you want to be, there are only positives there.

There's Derse Princes who can display a very awkward enthusiasm sometimes - I touched on it briefly, but the truth of it is, it's *very* similar to the mannerisms of a Derse Sylph. Prospits on either side seem too wound up with their self-perceptions, but...I dunno. Princes are dorks sometimes, and their best qualities come through the brightest when they are. It just rarely sticks. I hope it can.

Princes and Mages don't have much in common, but reading the descriptions can leave some Princes (mostly Derse) to claim they either always were a Mage, or transitioned. I mean if a Mage accepts their aspect even if it's kind of shit for them, and a Prince breaks down their aspect into fragments, you're kind of left with the same general amount of unsable information - in theory. In practice, Princes have what they have at the cost of rejecting everything else, making sweeping statements on a multitude of different topics they're rarely qualified to make. Mages keep it simple, and sounding profound is usually an accident that was irrelevant to the point they were making - just what works, the quiet truths they trust, with a faith in the greater whole of their aspect even if they can't see it yet. Mages may not expect special treatment, but that's a far cry from expecting famine, and this is to say *nothing* of the defensive and spiteful attitudes Princes are known for. Even stuffing it down makes it worse, since it doesn't take a genius to spot the difference between "someone who doesn't care" and "someone desperately trying to prove to anyone looking how much they don't care". I mean past the surface notes, the truth is Mages care alot about a couple things, and they don't really hesitate in mentioning it. Are there sore spots? Sure. Maybe. But you have to look for them, and Princes trying to hide theirs only makes it more obvious.

"Magic Scientist" and "Scientist who Fights Magic" can be confusing metaphors to put next to each other, but that's probably why Princes are called Princes - scientist is just a common enough rationalization, even in the comic, that I personally chose to work it more into the prose. Besides, the metaphor is secondary to the brain chemistry.

Follow up: why the hell would a Prince want to be known as a Mage anyways? The Heir impulse of a Mage is often woefully malnourished, and their ability to stand idle to suffering is well documented. Princes have a Sylph inside them that's significantly more difficult to keep quiet, where trying to feign indifference hurts everyone. How much is it really worth to *pretend* you don't care? And how much preventable tragedy will a Mage permit, because they think it the way of the world? Even if they reach out and get burned, even if they're overprotective and stifle others, at least a Prince's guilt compels them to scrutinize their actions - give up most days, but the opportunity to change and learn is present. Mages are not *nearly* as self-critical, and may only redirect themselves as much as is the bare minimum - not what's requested, not what's needed, nowhere close to what's possible. Still, it's ultimately up to both of them, on their own terms, if they want to change. Perhaps all this entry serves is to let others identify the two.

There's alot of fictional Mages who might lean Princey but are really just the rare varient of Mage that's gone fucking bannanas. Aiden Pearce of Watch Dogs is *reviled* by a good chunk of the gaming community, but I remember showing the E3 demon to a lovely friend of mine who responded with "He even walks the same way I do." Having played the game through, I can say he's an excellent example of the worst kind of Mage, to the point I've joked he's the evil version of my friend...who has still seriously considered vigilante activity, to be fair. Mostly a teenage thing for him. But he was serious, at the time, and it never truly went away. We fought about that once. I'm not what stopped him, I'll tell you that.

Princes and Seers run into the same issues as the Mage comparison, but maybe less obviously. Personal adaptation and passive attunement are a match, but to boil it down to lectures and self destruction misses everything else; Princes are Princes, and avoiding authority is usually because they don't see an opportunity to assert any yet. Seers can be firm, cynical, hurtful, self-sabotaging, and driven, but they do it all without ever really standing to gain; "getting the word out" isn't just enough, it's ideal. Princes need validation, titles, pats on the back, some sense of superiority, and it still won't stop them from making far too much a competition when it never was, never had to be, and isn't favouring them anyways. Even with all this to the side, Seers are still honest when they don't have all the information they'd like; you need to *really* press a Prince for them to stumble into admitting they don't know what they're talking about. which is a firm failure state for them. If they're decently modest, they'll just grumble and quiet down - if they think they've got reputation at stake, they'll flail around and insult people in a desperate effort to not lose ground (which ironically still makes it worse). A Seer is the more reserved, more dignified title for the beacon of wisdom they want to be...but it's a Sylph's vigor they're playing with. If they can bottle that up for a moment, they can't just point to that and ignore every other trademark Prince boast

and stumble they've made over the course of their life - but trying to do so is, itself, another Princely signature.

Rose and Kankri had bite, but it should be clear enough how far they are from Princehood. I've found male Seers to be a bit grumpier; Witchy-ness seems further from their immediate instincts or self-perception.

Princes and Maids are driven (usually), impatient, and doing their best to fix everything they see as wrong with the world. They're both generally pretty skewed on what's actually in front of them, but **creating** an aspect is less dangerous than **destroying** one (usually). Even then, a Prince's idea of "practicality" is influenced by their Sylph touch, so it's hard to do one without the other. Noticably, Maids rarely tire of dirty work, and rarely weigh those deeds as "merit" for winning an unrelated argument. This is to say nothing of the pride a Prince often feels from delegation and approval (closet Sylph), where Maids work alone even if it is for someone else. Maids have raw momentum, where Princes languish "If I can't do it, no one can" - though that's usually abbreviated to a flat "No one can". Look, if you want to be a smart, capable, trustworthy human being, just be one - that isn't a class in itself. There are some truly awful Maids out there, shitting on the lives of people around them without remorse, and trying to trace which is the Maid impulse and which is the Bard impulse misses the point. Creating, destroying...cripe, just be a good person, okay?

I am keeping my eyes out for an AFAB Princess, or an AMAB Maid (butler?). Princes, however, are not an unbiased source in finding one.

Princes and Bards were already close due to being paired classes, but a Bard's refusal to be classified and a Prince's refusal to be classified <u>as a Prince</u> exasperate the issue into some tricky camoflauge. In both, sway determines alot: Prospit Bards are very unrestrained with rambling questions, but Prospit Princes always take a serious tone shift when they need to make a point (which is often). Derse Bards have an enthusiasm for incessant and politically incorrect sadism, whereas Derse Princes have rules on what can and cannot be said (even if they change to reflect personal vendettas) - in short, Derse Princes will explain why you're wrong for not laughing, whereas Derse Bards don't explain anything and continue with the same joke (which may contain slurs). The Royals both need other people, but Bards don't seem to understand they do, and aren't really interested in pushing out *their* ideas compared to repeatedly arguing with *yours*. A Prince can pretend to be a clown on their terms, but they've got too much fight to be pushed around and ignored like one - even if they try.

Princes and Lords are very disparate in ingredients; **destroying** an aspect with skepticism and **commanding** it as living dogma are

almost complete opposites, really. Yet, despite a hundred states of anxiety beforehand, some Princes really do think the best thing they can do is be *louder*, aggressively trying to overpower everything in their way, boldly saying that only they truly know what a valid interpretation of their aspect is (which is still potentially "absolutely nothing"). The two classes have instabilities from different sources, but it can be difficult to tell when there's so much dick-measuring and boasting clogging up the useful data. Now it's the Prospits who irrefutably prove this as two different classes, as the unrestrained (almost childlike) optimism of those Lords is a stark contrast to the moodier patience of a Prospit Prince. While they may yearn for a Lord bravado, it's a pretty unwieldy mask to wear...but, Derse Princes, as we've established, *love* masks, and they can hurt alot of people while they do it. If they're your only examples of a Prince, you might be forgiven thinking they're the same class as Lords, but the cracks are everywhere a Prince doesn't want you to look.

"Ruler"! HAH! CALLING YOU OUT CARL JUNG, FUCKING AMATEUR HOUR

Okay yeah, Hussie noticed it first, but it's still fun to laugh at dead old people who are scared of communism. That and whatever Homestuck fan had a see saw where "Princes and Bards" lead into "Lords". Jesus, the modeled the WHOLE THING over "masculine aggression" and "female compassion". That's such a fucking gross oversimplification, and I'm triply pissed off that "Time" is seen as some inherently evil aspect to them. Look, I can't make this any clearer: "toxic masculinity" is not a class.

Let's ignore the rudeness for a second and look internal: a Prince with this much heft is putting all their faith in their destructive impulse, doubling-down on sneering and spite. Their aspect is under their control only by virtue of a violent stranglehold, which means it's a depressing series of conclusions that sound like "No it's impossible and only an idiot would try" and "It's the weakness of all humans and only I am smart enough to see through it, unlike you". Yet, it's the Sylph impulse that's doing the heaviest lifting, giving form and direction to the remaining aspect dwelling in this phillosophy, **creating** paths forward for anyone and everyone around them. It's hard to even tell what *doesn't* count as a misfire here, but it's worth noting the catch: Tyrant Princes are still very helpful, involved, and looking to other people for validation. Now usually that's after or during shitting on anyone who tries something (that the Prince didn't suggest), fostering and exploiting dependencies as their only close relationships. It's just pretty noticable that, past all their bluster, they're hugely dependent on an audience, and think the best way to prove that is to do something for them. It's noticable that, past all their constant criticism, they can dish it out but can't take it, always inventing excuses on the spot. They have a few talents they hype up as much as possible, and if you've got something better - let alone *overtake* them - they will throw an honest to god tantrum. Trying to match a Lord's aggression doesn't make them stronger; it only makes

them more fragile, terrified, desperate, and broadcasts that to everyone in their radius.

It's not the best that Princes can be. It's just what makes the most sense to them. The most natural. I suppose that's why "Ult-Dirk" is the way he is. It's...accurate.

Lords can be insecure, dismissive, pragmatic, sneaky, and cynical - but to an aspect and identity that is neither primary or active. Whatever chips-on-the-shoulder are in their passive side (we'll *get* to that), laying next to the everpresent seduction of "I am a golden god". This certainty of their place in the universe is difficult to crack - even if it would do alot of good if it did, at least long enough to consider who they are and what they're asking for. Princes playing Lord just can't keep it going, and that means breaking down most days; quiet, somber moments (often drunk) where they apologize and confess their shame, often to the victims they've bullied (or repeatedly attempted to bully) into intimacy. Lords may have victimhood, but it's as loud and ruthless as the rest of them, and it's usually to back up what they're aiming towards - Princes in tears aren't reinforcing their identity, they're admitting they're frauds. There is shame to bridges they didn't burn, but didn't fix...and Lords just aren't the type for shame. Regret, pain? Sure. Not shame. Even Prospit Princes come close to a realization they're making things worse by overtrusting their instincts, but it's so difficult to get any kind of Prince to do something about it. If they stop acting like a Lord, they'll just reinvent themselves again, but at least that proves they never were one in the first place.

I have (or, had) the pleasure of knowing a Lord of Void. It's interesting finding someone who says "nothing matters" as a good thing, often acomponied by "I also do not matter" (he slid into self-aggrandizing eventually, but for the most part he's suitably defused). I did wind up pushing him a bit too far...I still say he swaggers about too much, faults people for intitiating arguments while expecting his statements to go unchallenged. I put on enough pressure to hear him make his points, and they sure as hell weren't enough for me...but, they were enough for him. I've seen Princes argue, and he ain't one. There's "Would fall apart if he was proven wrong in an argument" and "Doesn't realize he's capable of losing an argument".

Things ended up going too far when he was busy trying to claim cancel culture is a problem because his brother had an incident, and there was no other evidence besides that...just a bit of conjecture, but, it didn't really go further then the anecdote. Why would it? He's a Lord. I actually miss the mental gymnastics Princes get into; at least they pivot. There was some other stuff too, but, I shouldn't vent. The purpose of these little slices of my experience is just to articulate paticulars of class interactions and cliches. Your own experiences matter more than me, and I hope you all keep a look out - I'll probably make more sense when you're *done* reading this document.

Princes and Heirs are...I mean...like...we're all seeing the obvious storytelling significance here, right? Princes always veer towards an image of a powerful and respected strategist friend-leader, and Heirs are the class that keeps stumbling into that, frequently (though not always) refusing to admit it. It should be a pretty clear tell that Princes like to leave their signature on things, and purposefully trying

to avoid that results in the heavy-handed not-quite-martyrdom we discussed in the Knight comparison. Still, Prospit Princes can come close to an Heirs even-handed subtelty if they try their best, and that is worthy of some praise; Derse Princes may have more overlapping ground with the dark path of brutal authority that Derse Heirs dance around. In both cases, there's a discussion of the people we grow into, rather than the archetypes we start as, but we're here to have the argument of sorting the two; in the doomed effort to achieve perfection, who is the iconoclast and who the illusionist? With the descriptions given, Heirs could still see their worst habits in the Prince section, as Princes could see shimmers of who they are in Heirs. This is check, not checkmate - `after all, I've still been pulling punches.`

Heirs and Princes do share phases: shy and underestimated, broken-soul resignation, over-protective older sibling, and the control freak almost-authority whose cynicism to their aspect vexes their attempts to "get it right". That last one is rare for Heirs, but it *does* happen; Heirs can become transparently argumentative and irritated, with an aspect they no longer truly believe in anymore. They'll push through all the concerns of their friends and family, paranoid to all possible dangers, while nothing is ever quite good enough for them to stop stressing themselves out. Of course, what's going on here is that their twitchy fingers have gone into overdrive: their aspect is in a permanent state of **change**, a sore spot of constant maintenence while they're the "only one who can get it right", with perfection eternally elusive. If that sounds smug, you are correct: Heirs will do it "for you", but there's *always* been a pride in assuming no one else is qualified to run their own lives, which is only getting increasingly less quiet. Alongside this infantalizing and undermining, Heirs are still the "sticky" debators they always were, but they still don't ask for much besides agreement; their concern is that you don't hurt yourself, where your best place is on the sidelines looking pretty. If Heirs actually *lead*, it is by example, but trusting others to keep up with them is trusting them to not have differences of opinion too. The fact is, Heirs can be much more dangerous tyrants than Princes, both from a fearsome attitude and the fact that their goals *might actually be worth* the iron fist.

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Originally, I put the DCAU Superman in for Prospit Princes. I no longer maintain that
position. It's depressing though; without him, the bar is back to the low standard of
Zebruh. Isn't life something?
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These obsessions with taking on the world can fit some of the more romantic ideals a Prince has about their identity. The thing is, Princes are Princes, and resembling Heirs is very contextual compared to all the shit they've ever done before, are doing, or will do; lusting for

delegation for the sake of superiority and not objective, tantruming if they don't get enough validation or acknowledgement of past achievments, and insulting people on matters as simple as hairstyle or music taste (because *they're* worried they'll be made fun of for it). Princes feel a pull to others, but that's the Sylph in them; who they are, what their primary aspect is, all of it is highly specific and selfish, made fragile when measured in this kind of playing field. It's Heirs who can stand against the whole world, but its Princes who panic if two people disagree with them at once, and self-destruct if three make it clear they see through the bluster. Heirs can negotiate with anyone who will listen, but Princes are so vulnerable they frequently end up with (or seek out) the socially anxious, aimlessly aloof, or literal children. Heirs spiral in isolation, but a Prince's need for attention means they'll drag you down with them. When the chips are down to fight the odds, they buckle and cut their losses, compared to Heirs who seem to fight harder the clearer it is they're not going to win. An Heir's aspect is elusive because they want to rearrange it to their vision, keeping its identity intact; a Prince's aspect is based on rejection, with the Sylph antonym filling in the slack for everything they can't personally understand or feel comfortable with. None of this was ever more complicated than **change** or **destroy**. None of it.

I don't know how many Princes are going to read this. How far they'll get. How relevant it is that I was groomed by one. Bothers me less these days, but I can never tell what people want to hear and what they need to hear. I fall back on what is. I accept my instincts.

It hurts to hear, but Princes will always have a huge potential for damage, seemingly for their entire lives. Learning to deal with that (or, more commonly, ignore it) doesn't "cure" them of Princehood. An Heir's dynamics and defaults appear permanent, and Princes don't "upgrade" into Heirs either. Squirm, sneer, let the whole world know that you're not convinced, and just wind up one more cliche; hopefully, you take what's compiled here, and do something better. You want to prove yourself? Break the mold? Be a good human being, your way. Call it Prince, call it Personality Archetype #11, call it *Spicy* Heir, call it something you made up, whatever, it's still *you*, and several other people you can learn from rather than trying to ice skate uphill. Accepting that shouldn't be followed by helpless whining that you're fated to be a bad person; a good line from a mediocore video game once said "Good is something you do, not something you are". Unless you've got something better, I suggest you keep it in mind.

Or you can sulk. That'll show me.

Like I said, calling a class a "King" is just...I don't know, I like to think of it as "resident social groups focal figure and meme". You could do that with any class, you know? These are all just words surrounding people - what actually matters to you?

I like to think that the best version of *any* class is the ability to own up to your own belief structure, recognizing it's an illusion and arguing it's merit regardless - better than projecting or assuming. Heirs and Princes both avoid that: Heirs barely realize what they're doing, and Princes failing to understand their fragile happiness isn't universal. One too modest, the other too wound up - hence the names. None of them mean good or evil, and you can get over yourselves because you are or aren't "ideal".

You know what Princes do that no one else can do? What I truly respect about them? They can hit wildly unexplored parts of their aspect, and express something totally unique, out there, and thought provoking - like a Bard but with scheduling. It's as soon as they stop trying to protect themselves, piss other people off, gaslight others, as soon as you GIVE ALL THAT UP, there's actually a decent conversationalist I like watching movies or creating stories with. I always miss the banter with Princes in my life - and they probably *can* make that their defininig feature, if they get the fuck over themselves.

- - -

Okay. We've established what classes are and aren't, in a suitable amount of detail. The totality, the irrefutable, the deviations, the potential, all of it. We set the boundries well enough to discuss those that (appear to) cross them freely.

One last dance.

AUTHORS

(PARADOXES, PLASTICS, PHILLISTINES)

The reason someone can be a "destroyer" for their whole lives is that they can't actually completely remove what they're fighting - or rather, "fix". Remember that Princes and Bards both wish to rewrite these ideologies, and while narrow-minded selfishness is a *hazard*, it can never be allowed absolutely; their ideological interpretations are highly subjective, at their worst when pretending not to be, but always hold enough malleable uncertainty to be debated in an effort for validation. This, however, is the step past that: no more talking, no more arguments, no more hesitation, just a fixed single point of absolute subjectivity masquerading as absolute objectivity. All the certainty of the Master classes, but a belief adapted almost beyond recognition, and without the will to fight back; **conquered**. No greater belonging, no acceptance, no nuance, no hesitation, only raw rejection at anything that does not meet your criteria. Of course, what flickers of an aspect remain does not inspire the weilder as much as others; languishing is the most natural outcome, an immovable object to a Master's unstoppable force. To lash back out at the world, to force it into place, to turn it inside out...what words do you even have to say? What justifies the sovereignty so that only your discontented interpretation is truth? In writing, in manuscript, in decree, there is only dry practicality to shut out the noise; a passion that never appears as such, a logic that never adds up. The Author writes "God is Dead", and with a death of the Author, the Author is God.

I went with “Corrupt” at first. I’ve posted versions of this document with “Transform” as the verb, but while that was diplomatic, I never liked it too much. This feels right.

Yet...is *this* your purpose? Or just fear? Is this destruction not mirrored in the same path of the destructive Time aspect, where lashing out at the world in single conviction of spite was only ever from someone deaf to validation? Deaf to a Master’s music? Can you truly not exist without needing *everyone else* to know you exist? Yours is the quietest passion, but it still exists; poems and prose are intimate, and say more about the one who wrote it. That *is* what you want, right? To be heard? To be known?

I’m not blindly filling in the blanks with these two. Homestuck accounted for all people. And some don’t belong in the world of ideas, according to Hussie apparently.

But they should. And I’ll make sure it happens.

AUTHORS CONT: IDENTIFICATION

(AMONG US)

The thing about these two is that they’re likely to have verbose ideas on who they already are. With everything established thus far, we can at least *try* to establish what they are or aren’t, with some grist to the argument. So, with sincerity, please consider the following:

1: None of the classes thus far have resonated with you.
2: Multiple classes have resonated with you, and the discrepancies section has not helped.
3: A class has resonated with you, but only in certain sections (this is doubly important if you don’t see yourself in the unhealthy “ugly sides”).
3a: You would argue the reason you only resonate with certain sections is you “matured”, “grew out of it”, or otherwise permanently silenced selective, chronic, lifelong habits.
4: You were already 100% sure about your classpect due to a prior experience with the Homestuck fandom, but none of this matches.
4a: You were already 100% sure about your classpect, but have changed it now/recently to something else that you are 100% sure about.
4b: The new classpect you are 100% sure about doesn’t match the behaviors here either.
4c: The classes described below DO resonate with you, give you pause for thought, but you rationalize it away as momentary doubts in 30 seconds.
5: Assuming you don’t have a class.
6: Reading the following descriptions for these two classes, or this section, and claiming “Everybody thinks like that”.

6a: The idea that everyone does not, in fact, think like that, is existentially terrifying.

If enough of these sound familiar, you're probably one of the classes here. If you are, but still don't agree with it, we can at least describe them well enough so that outsiders can recognize them. With all this in mind, let's get this show on the road.

- - -

PRIESTS are individuals born into an eternal Tabula Rasa, constantly shifting their moral code and behaviors from year to year, social group to social group. They have a great listless boredom, leaving them prone to low energy and inaction. While this often leaves them attaching their self-worth to small talents, gimmicks, catchphrases, and other petty concerns ("Just let me have this."), it's not a rule; they're prone to wild and sudden creative sparks, ready to commit their lives to a new career, hobby, lifestyle, project, or even *people*. Too often, these are fleeting curiosities at something "new and exciting", which fail to make it past the blueprint stage; rarely accountable to their promises, Priests are often dismissive of embarassments as much as anything (or anyone) that fails to interest them. Often the most content Priests are the ones who float between idle passions, riding the waves of their wandering fascinations without taking it too seriously, simply enjoying the company of their friends. For those that wax spiteful over making it in the history books, there is the rare iteration that has enough intelligence, intrepidness, or inheritance to chase those wants - but they're never gonna catch them. All it does it make them lose sight of what actually matters, and what they already have.

I'm about to make alot of claims. Custom classes are usually the sign of a Homestuck fan who's more interested in dumb fun then assuming there's merit to Hussie's system - and it's pretty obvious I think there's merit. More than that, I'm quite certain there *is* an example of this class existing in the comic...in fact, you could argue it's the only one.

Priests often feel like an insignificant witness, a conduit or beacon to the beauty of the world around them - yet, this isn't their focus. They're not that *content* being insignificant, and most take in the light of what's around them in order to reflect it in whichever direction they want. Now, a Prince's aspect is more of a weird abusive relationship, where their constant complaints speak to an unresolved schism, and boasts about being "over it" are a bluff. The better metaphor for Priests is that their aspect is buried in an unmarked grave on the other side of town, and has remained there for years undisturbed - it's just not <u>dead</u>. Their aspect is personally **conquered**, only expressed in the subtlest secrets, in fits of emotion, or when their

misdirecting excuses are strained enough to reveal their real motive: “because I want to”. Before all that, it’s written off with a calm certainty, obscuring their personal agendas and delights under any number of blamelessly altruistic explanations. This makes them bigger hypocrites than Princes, but this process is all so automatic they may legitimately not realize what they’ve lost and what they’re fighting for. While faux-lucid cynicism *can* be invoked (especially when pressed), this buried sense of self makes Priests...”slippery”. If you see them display their aspect, you probably weren’t supposed to: it’s a break of character, a suspicious pattern, a convenient coincidence, a slip of the tongue, a repressed thrill, an exclusive right, a violation of principles, a necessary measure, a mishandled art “no one understands but me”, a blunt confession, what always takes priority, what they said wouldn’t happen again, a beast coming for you, a beast they slew, a beast they *are*, and the only thing that ever made them feel alive.

“Adaptation” really does translate to “Destruction”, but I’m not sure Priests are that happy in discontent, you know? Look Time’s my wheelhouse, but I’m a Page born and bred - hyping up reality, the IDEA of reality, is my own delusion, and I’ve got a Rogue of Space in the back of my head to fill the gaps. Course, if Time’s destruction, and Princes are destroyers, ain’t it redundant? Now, an actual Prince of Time is...technically Kanaya, following inversions. I have to imagine Hussie agreed since her turning into a vampire is a pretty clear example of rebuking inevitability. Still. What Princes “do” to their aspect is leave their mark on it, defy it, get twitchy and refuse to let it be...all Timebound amounts to is seeing that itself as values. Not burning down your hopes and dreams, but dreaming of burning something down - anything, really! And if that’s the value, and it’s meant to be universal, than as much as you might overthink the time you have left and want more, you respect the PRESSURE it puts on someone, and how we all compete with each other in GLORIOUS CHAOS.

Caliborn is, paradoxically, a very strong believer in anti-belief. A determined artist in regards to anti-art. He altruistically sees harmony in everyone seeking self-interest and competition. I get it. Obviously. A much more deft and self-aware hand is Aradia, who tried to not take things so personally, and has much more restraint in where her talents would do <u>good</u>. But Caliborn is very important, because while Priests aren’t Lords of Time, they’re comparable. You could see it as an ingredient, and doubly so if we were talking about a Priest of Time. Hypothetically.

The most stable and agreeable Priests do and say little of substance - either from having a good thing going already, or a dry imagination. With the ability to be “anything”, they can readily choose “nothing”, existing as the most neutral human being you could meet. They just *are*, idly drifting and defining themselves by anything they assume sets them apart from the crowd (even if it really doesn’t). Always the outsider, it’s very likely they’ll be the one to say that no class mentioned thus far registers, and this whole thing is probably making a big deal out of nothing - but those are threads you can pull on, where even mutability is immutable. Their absolute individuality comes at the price of equally strong ideas about *everything else*, and they won’t always be a bystander; they are, without a doubt, the single most <u>potentially</u> dangerous class there is. With a fluid sense of morality and self, they can do and say whatever it takes to chase their dreams of import and legacy. Who they hurt, who they were, can

always be left in the past in a way that will alienate anyone who's stuck around - or anyone who asks around. There's truly nothing holding them back in the moment, yet this requirement of needing other people to believe in their work, believe in *them*, means they require more and more validation as "upkeep" the bigger their dreams get...and yet, the bigger dreams create bigger emptiness, making them prone to lash out at anything short of *exactly* the response they want from people. It's not pretty. For anyone. But as fragile as it may feel sometimes, as cliche as it may sound, trusting others and truly listening to them might be the best fix.

I wish I had better advice. I sincerely mean that.

"Priest" is what I came to eventually. "Lich" was considered, but felt too accusing, too demeaning. "Serf", for their lack, but that's just got no flair, and doesn't resonate with the whole of it. "King" could work, except for the frankly alarming amount of queer people who qualify...abuse and negligance seem a commonality in their childhoods, so it shouldn't be a surprise that those are the voices that go unheard the longest. Still, "King"...Hussie did leave that spot open, technically. I've made my thoughts clear, but you gotta wonder what they thought - and believe me, they know.

Prospit Priests are, if all their needs are met, "fine". Normal, well-adjusted, modest, keeps a few jokes going...and really not much else. Which suits them. They're still overly-eager about sharing any joke they hear with the 1-2 most important people in their lives, still not easily inspired or invested to anything beyond them, but they can truly be harmless. Of course, if they start getting *sketchy*, they wind up people who really want things to <u>stay</u> normal; more vocal about which voices feel unpleasant, more assertive about wanting things to go their way, less and less patience for those that step out of the drawn lines. At this point, their downfall is their own casual honesty: increasingly bitter yet still orbiting the people in front of them, they can say awful things about people not in the room, and break promises they'll deny ever having made in the first place. Gaslighting is not a tactic at this point, it is instinctive reflex; the more they have, the more they want, the more they will spin doctor anything to keep hold of their social group...or, again, they're just people with no shtick higher than the latest funny movie they watched. They're almost unaware they *have* an aspect, but they're only innocent if they don't have power; whether authority was claimed through it, or awakened by it, their hidden agenda is guarded by a truly staggering amount of double-think, excuses, and misrealities. You might never believe they had it in them, but the greatest deceptions are always performed by those that can fool themselves.

I thought my dad was a Lord of Light before, when I started with all this. I was very close. I will send this to him someday. I hope it helps. To say anything else is to give his flights of fancy the symbolic honor he always wanted them to have. He's just one more arrangement of delusions, a Priest of Void. That's all that's worth saying.

You know, I’m trying to hold off on the most villanous examples, even though those are some of the most commonly depicted iterations of Priests, Prospit or otherwise. Frank O’Sullivan from Brooklyn Nine-Nine is a nice non-mythologized depiction (even if he’s still an antagonist), where his attempts to manipulate and reinterpret people’s words is so bad its played for laughs. It is funny. But my dad also said my mom and the government hacked my brain and that’s why I have bad memories about him. So you know. I’m hoping you take something from this.

I’ve known some sketchy ones but, these days, I know the signs. I’ve got a few chill ones around, and one was partial to being asked questions. He has answered alot of questions. I wasn’t quite sure what he was at first. He looked at the class fan quiz and said “Muse” felt right. I didn’t believe him at the time, but...well, from a certain point of view, bullseye.

Derse Priests often enjoy being “the devil you know”, which is less cute and more of a red flag the more they act upon it. They are much better at articulating and expressing their aspect, but almost always as an indefensible indulgance, not meant for others. Derse Priests are lonely, selfish, unless they aren’t: people rub off on them, and that fluttering contentedness can suddenly feel like they make sense and the universe makes sense...but the clearer that is, the more it feels like they still don’t *belong* to it, only that they *percieve* it. The fact that they are as suggestible as they are capable of suggestion is an everpresent uncomfortability, not a contextual one like Prospits; to (believe they) control others makes them (feel like they can) control themselves. Derse Priests can sound erratic at vocalizing how overwhelmed they are trying to be everything to everyone when no one asked them to, but this paranoid perception of empathetic omniscience is one of the many things they’re “certain” of. The fact that they’re capable of conscious deception - of trying to *force* intentions, inflections, and “warning signs” into people’s speeches - is only an extension of the unconscious deception that they *have* to for their own good, or that there is an almost-divine entitlement to do so. Whether in self-deprecating pity, gleeful supervillain cruelty, or cold unflinching authority, nothing changes that they need people more than people need them - they’ll crack if they can’t convince you. It is in trying to hijack everyone’s thoughts, of pretending they are the only qualified one to solve life itself, that they reveal projection and fear. There’s more masks here than a Derse Prince, but it could take a lifetime for them to finally quit the “For your own good” justifications...and that *still* doesn’t mean they’ll stop.

It’s hard to say what media depictions to point to on this that aren’t so villanous it only hurts my case - but if you’re imagining them (or know a real one personally), I hope it puts it all in perspective. I know two personally, at least; one more recent and candid who puts trust in me, and the other one of my oldest friends who wants nothing to do with me anymore. She was smart. Smart enough to know she was different, but laughed it off as “evil”. She saw something familiar there, and presented loud and proud to friends...but she couldn’t shake her own irritation at being told to do literally anything she didn’t want to. So many wild promises, so many enthusiastic starts, and then a sneer or a shrug when I try to follow through with her, or just ask what happened.

I think I only now realize how hard she tried - but the times she let me down, the times she hurt me to protect herself, the times she told me to shut up for crying under her abuse, will never go away until she apologizes. Which she probably won’t - when she hurt

me, I lashed back in my own need for justice and got her kicked out of the house we were staying in. I guess I don't really *regret* that (she got all manipulative to my friends in response, which was why I figured she too dangerous to be kept around) but it's weird reconciling potential. Weird thinking she really wasn't lying when she tried to be a good friend all those times - she just, struggled, and needed it argued to her. For what it's worth, she was an incredible author and roleplayer. Smart, good wit. I'll always respect that. Might sound hollow coming from me. But she was a Priest of Doom, and she got what she wanted, just not what she asked for. Feels like it's always one or the other...

INVERSION (PRELUDE): As you may have picked up, Priests are the active inversion of the Muse class. While the disparity is sharp, this is the required extreme of intensity to balance out how much a Muse gives to other people: the most distant outsider, alien to all drawn lines. Of course, they're not actually truly lucid, if Princes and Thieves before them weren't already a tell: they're backed into a corner because of these projections, the highest of skeptic (supposedly) to the equally highest of delusion, rebelling to an over-saturated enshrinement of the outside world by...well, being very quiet about it. Muse mannerisms underpin alot, but are never presented as such, much like a Prince's shame for Sylph-ish attributes. Yet, the **destroyed** aspect has a signature the **conquered** aspect only implies; a Prince's reinventions of persona are childs play compared to a Priest's shifting soul. Even when it's not in the driver's seat, as the unnamed cold spite of Muses, the Priest impulse is difficult to track down in actual "shape". So, before we actually talk about synthesizing the Priest and Muse impulses, we must identify, quantify, and dissect the former, in every iteration it presents.

It's just like I said: If you don't see how it completes the system, you might think it jeapordizes it.

Especially if you are one.

DISCREPANCIES: Priests are complicated enough that one can't just list a couple classes they *might* be confused with: they can be confused with every single one. Sometimes this is moment to moment, and sometimes they may resemble one long-term only to shift for a multitude of reasons - even then, their imitations are often a cross stitch of many classes. Priests muddle the definitions of classes both by naturally existing, and through their own personal interpretations of themselves...yet, they were Priests beforehand and will be Priests afterwards. More than that, a grim narrative presents itself from these comparisons: "adaptation" often translates to "the path of least resistance". Priests imitating classes are never bound to the same convictions, making them fair-weather-friends more often than not. If the following descriptions sound like "evil doppelgangers", it is because it is difficult to describe them otherwise. Discerning them in your day to day life will be a fine line, and sometimes all you've got is a gut feeling that something feels "off", or the actual reveal that someone wasn't who you (and even they) thought they were.

The way Priests latch on to their own headcanons over *everything else* a work has bugs me, but it's ultimately harmless. Identifying themselves, however, often a bit off-center and omissing details, which others can notice. This is thrice as bad for Priests who are familiar with Homestuck, as they're well familiar with the system, likely got into it (for at least a month), and already made a conclusion. It doesn't hurt Hussie never made too bold a stance on it, and Jung's work is only theories. If you don't believe me taking it all too seriously...first, how'd you make it this far? Why did you? But, more importantly, it'd make it all the harder to accept an answer that wasn't in the book to start with.

Classes aren't just empowering - they hurt. They bind us. They are often inconvinient, and how we torture ourselves when no one else is around. If it's just "fun" and "sounds cool", you get incorrect answers, and obscure who you truly are. You're not a Witch just because you're a Wiccan (or just think Wiccans are cool); you're not a Bard just because you're detached; you're not a Thief because you like Vriska; you're not a Lord just because it's "the badass Master class"; you're not none of them because you're "SPECIAL"...but given where they are, and how they're handled in Homestuck, maybe Hussie would say so. I've got no patience for it. They're a type of person, they can be classified, and I'll do it here. And I *will* try to make it something worth holding to. What I said about Princes is more relevant to you than them: if you can't spot yourself, ask a friend. Truth might hurt, but it's a better building material.

PROPHETS: Priests might get lost in their way of doing things like Mages, and while it's a calm state for them, they'll aim higher or lower, rarely knowing their limits. Really, a Mage who could do anything they want is more likely to buy an isolated cabin compared to world domination, and they never need anyone to know either. It is an isolating life as a Priest, but Mages are at a comfortable state of belonging with something bigger than them; Mages fit their personality to a greater ideology, and Priests fit their ideology to their personality, in a disparity of the smallest acceptance versus the greatest antonym. Priests may try to act without colouring outside the lines or "doing things incorrectly". but while these awkward schisms of expectation *might* resemble a Mage's weirdness, there isn't a comfortable middle ground. Either the Priest tries to get everyone to do things their way, they quietly adopt someone else's consensus, or they straight up leave - not the conversation, but the friendship. They just can't seem to proccess differences of opinion, where they're either going to absorb what's in front of them (even unintentionally), or drag everything to a halt until you give them an answer they want. Mages are hardwired to let things lie when their patience gives, but Priests will twist the knife as far as they can when they blow a fuse - and that, unfortunately, is where their aspect is at its loudest and most distinct.

Priests can *talk* like Seers, but they don't really *listen* like one. If they're just casually chatting, then acting Seer-ish is more an idle fascination, which can be disregarded or discarded as needs be. If they're taking active pride in being a wellspring of information however, there's more than a few tells. For one, Seers are neutral and forgiving (more than they should be), but Priests have a bitterness to them, writing off people or ideas they see as worthless - which does

coincidentally seem to look like “offends the Priest personally”. This leads into the second point, where Priests provide too many answers without asking questions; there is no investigation for new information, where friends wiggling out of assumptions is not fascinating, but *irritating*. Thirdly, being dead wrong tends to sour the mood, and while they might give up, they also might double down with undermining and gaslighting. Seers have much more humble wisdom, but Faux-Seer Priests will trip over themselves by moving the goalposts, contradicting themselves, sadistically mocking their enemies, making wild assumptions of others intentions, and invalidating others as the sole arbiter of “common sense” (because again, this is just Prince^2). Real Seers bluff certainty, juggling possibilities and shrugging off dead ends, but calling their bluff is something deflected with jokes or modesty, as a half-Witch would. These shifted priorities also extend to another Seer staple: self-destruction. For one, Priests are far less likely to *do* that in its entirety, as a focus on their self often leads to thoughts of self-preservation. Secondly, if they are self-sabotaging, withering, isolating, or legitimately suicidal (please contact your local hotline), it tends to take on a martydom angle, not a noble pawn in a bigger game. Even if the world has no place for them, they will fixate on how they do not belong to it more than anything else.

They are the double-inverse, but the biggest differences are only if a Priest goes as loud as possible. The similarities are more pressing, especially starting out: everyone has a framework, a narrative, a story, but them. Or so it feels. Even a Witch of Void inverse would mean some structure, some pretense, but what a Priest has cooking is a very different kind of abscence.

MAGICIANS: A Priest playing Witch is honestly a very safe and stable position for them, but it doesn’t mean they actually are the genuine article. Their levity is even more situational, and the dry apathy underpinning it is *much* more demanding - even Prospit Witches consciously recognize what they’re stuffing down, and it was never “be the most important person on Earth”. They’re on the same branch, but it’s the Tier 4 intensity of malleability that can trick itself into thinking it’s at Tier 1 - temporarily, conditionally, nominally. While Priests can try to define themselves through a shifting mass of imprecise fascinations, it is not as a Witch does; in fact, it’s far more likely that the most displayed aspect is their *inverted* one. All you’re looking at is a Muse who isn’t taking their job very seriously, but is at least saying the quiet part out loud - they are completely in control of their view of the world, and always have been, no matter how much they can pretend or forget they don’t. These ripples reflect how they see the people around them, or how a Priest wants those people to see the Priest themself; they do not, however, reflect the true active aspect and heart of a Witch. There’s as much bite there as there is kindness, and even the resignations make a clean exit of being

washed away by the waves. Priests, as discussed, tend to see themselves as grander martyrs when they do at all, where even resignations have firm instructions on what people should do without them, as much as with them. Priests will be alot of things besides Witch-like, but just because there's a difference doesn't mean they should feel like its off-limits.

It is so much faster to just say "One is AMAB and one is AFAB". I'm putting in the effort for *you*, so you better appreciate it.

Comparisons to Heirs can go a few ways, and with surprising deftness; in being autonomous Muses, they can exert the same will in the name of others, mimicking the subtle **change** of Heirs. However, trying to be the problem-solver and diplomat is rather hollow without a Mage's center, highlighting their dispassion and drifting interests - if they're not going full on Muse worship, then people's problems feel too much like distractions, irrational, boring. It's Heirs who get right into the thick of issues and works them out from all angles, where method is the merit. Yes, there's a certain symmetry with the worst Heir traits in becoming someone's first (and only) approver of information, but this trained helplessness from a real Heir is just so they can help eternally - Priests don't want to hear complaining, which makes a routine of *crisis* undesireable. They can go tit-for-tat in regards to an Heir's potential for authority - from aimless spitballing to autocratic superiority - but everything else won't match. Disinterest and vaugery can make it difficult to know what the next step in the plan is, while fleeting fascinations take priority as "the thing everyone has to do right now", running akin to Breath or Void tactics without ever *really* integrating more wills. It's tempting to consider oneself a self-sufficient good-samartin, selflessly helping those around you, but the catch with Priests is that they're not very self-sufficient, and not great at knowing what selflessness looks like outside their own definition of it. The catch with Heirs is that they're addicts, and that's its own issue.

I'm going somewhere with this.

Also, based on the amount of queer people who end up Priests (not all of them, and not all Priests, but alot), this might explain why some of them latched on the June headcanon. Not saying there aren't trans Heirs, but the consensus sticks out.

SERVANTS: Living in the shadow of your own impossible dreams is, if nothing else, kind of a bummer. Priests have many avenues to tackle their desires, but feeling helpless is understandable. This is a road that leads to Page-y traits of wistfulness and imploring, with an awkward exterior to laugh off the insanity of what you actually *want*. Priests playing the Page route can weaponize their self-pity, manipulate their friends into favours (god forbid romance), cry until they're carried to the finish line, and obscure their transgressions by

focusing on their shortcomings...and, unfortunately, none of this is actually *beyond* true Pages. ~~We~~ They can be very treacherous individuals, so we cannot distinguish the two by sin alone - but we *can* tell the difference from language. Just as with the Princes/Pages comparison, there is a disparate difference between heavy ideals crushing someone, and phantom ideals failing to feed them. Pages know **exactly** who they want to be, but they're strangled trying to find a realistic route there, studying their idols for tips. A Priest's want and ennui lack a stable identity, making it difficult to decide a direction, or even articulate *why* they feel empty in the first place. Both will wallow, but Pages are drawn to a taste for adventure, lurching forward with borrowed confidence they hope to earn later. Faux-Page Priests are drawn to more practical displays of authority, and won't let go just because they feel "unworthy"; they may express doubts, but rarely ever to the point of sacrifice. With all this in mind, Priests are very likely to stop imitating Pages as soon as it doesn't get them anything...which, ironically, stops them from ever grasping a Page's potential for defiant statements, rallying cries, and other heroics. Even if a Priest bears their whole vulnerable heart, it's not one that leads charges into battle - but hey, it could still be beautiful.

I keep thinking of Huey and Hal from Metal Gear. Worse since I knew someone like that.

He was cute. I definately had a crush on him. Didn't recognize it at the time. But he still made everything hell for me just because I wanted him to be better (and not racist)...and it didn't help the other main voice in that group was also a Priest. "Drama Queen". I was surrounded on all sides. Just wish I knew better. Guess I do now.

Knighthood, then? Devout to others, self-sacrificing, put others on a pedestal? Viable. I mean Priests can get awfully excited about where they want people to wind up, and being *aware* they're kinda twisted on the inside can spark some penitent ideas. It just doesn't click with how readily Knights are bossed around, or just *expect* to be. Dersites will lean into this harder, as Priests can find themselves pushing jokes too far, and using irony as a crutch to say nothing, but it just ain't the same martyr complex. Knights keep people at a comfortable range that is not "divine light/cursed demon", with only a few layers of detachment hiding a very consistent playbook on helping people, and Thiefish escape plans bubbling under the surface. Without that outline, without even *being* a passive class, Derse Priests often just have more layers of irony under their irony, which can become existentially terrifying.

Hussie always did say Dave was the easiest to write. That stuck with me. I mean long before this document, long before I got back into Homestuck, I still wondered what *his* class was. Derse, at least, felt obvious. "Waste" raises questions. "Space" moreso.

OUTLAWS: A Priest's self-interest is usually buried, but Muse mannerisms can be suppressed enough that it becomes transparent

(mostly for Dersites). However, this is still a mask, and will either focus on one of two Thiefish traits: charismatic cruelty, or victimhood. It's important to remember what true Thieves are: optimistic, motivated, ambitious, deathly loyal, risk-taking jerks. The Knight interplay does create a self-sabotaging tsundere, but it is the *contradiction* that allows the rebel to not rebel against friends. Thieves are suckers for praise, but they're hesitant about power; they'll reject totality not because it's "too much work", but because it just won't feel right, and they already know their place in the world next to the friends they'll fight for. Priests can act Thiefish contextually or Knightish contextually, but they omit the dichotomy and details; Thieves only **steal** from an aspect within reason, not **conquer** the whole damn thing for exclusive personal use. It is the "rebel/sidekick" axis of aspects that looks for "blood brothers to stick it to the man"; it is the "everything or nothing" totality that encourages "divine soulmates while the whole world can and should go to hell". The first Faux-Thief Priest blurs into Prince and Lord habits, where whim is theatrically hyperbolized into a near sociopathic disregard for everything else. While this narcissism can go on for awhile, it might evolve into "I'm only making excuses for my self interest", but it's never *really* self-awareness if followed by "What do you mean you aren't?". It doesn't matter how many or few people they're trying to impress, it's still the Tier 4 "center of my world" worship, and trying to force someone to fit the idea of who the Priest wants them to be can be overwhelming, manipulative, or just active denial.

I said Spider8itch was too easily confused with another class, didn't I? Modern Vriska is less Life-Is-Strange Chloe and much more Handsome Jack or Pagan Min.

The second iteration of Faux-Thieves leans more on Rogue, Seer, and Page-y habits, but still leading with spite: reclusive, bitter, vapid, languishing, unapproachable, suspicious, and all around venomous. They'll have only a few friends, harder walls, and a blank (if not bored) look on their face when a call for action presents itself; they are enjoying the quiet joys of an aspect withheld for too long, and will shrink and seclude until no one is around to take it from them. While these two masks can swap out for each other, it is a betrayal of what's coming out of their mouth; all this persecution and victimhood is still theatre, just for drama instead of (admittedly dark) comedy. The Muse side is given more space to breathe, readily giving (admittedly condescending) advice to friends - advice this Priest is openly flying in the face of. Indulging their personal aspect in this unmitigated form flies in the face of the standards they set for everyone else, but a Muse's rationalizations of cosmic penance only make it out halfway, with contempt picking up the slack. It is this stubborn selfishness that can be confused with a Thief, and perhaps rightfully so: this is as

close as you get to seeing the Priest motives without the Muse's. This is how much flame is left to burn, what they can take for themselves if they run as far as they can from trying to influence other people. It's not enough to share or rally troops like Thieves, but if they'd control their envious sense of competition, they might realize it's enough for them.

I've heard stories. I know some in passing. But my opinion could still be coloured. She was Doombound, like I said. I mean Jehovah's witness parents, no wonder. I liked her supervillain routines back when we were kids. Always wondered where that fire went. Guess it was always smoke. But I don't know if this was truly "the real her". Just more natural.

Playing "Rogue" isn't out of the question. Where the Heir touch is more of a red flag, this earnest and humble sympathy shows a Priest who's trying to put others first, without an implication of authority - at least, not in terms of heirarchy. It's unlikely a prideful Priest would admit to not having all the answers, but it *is* true that they lose themselves while being pulled by people's wills and walk the edge of collapsing - though "disinterest" is more prominent than a Rogue's bashfulness or stress. It's also still lacking the form of a proper aspect; true Void has rules, and while a kind Priest may contemplate sinking into nothing (briefly - "immortal fame" is still pretty consistent), they're still prone to wanting you to forget only *specific* things. Less what troubles you, more what troubles them, and blurring that line will get less Rogue-ish by the second. Even if a Priest *knows* what they stand to gain, they'll try to go back to not believing it, and directly confessing it is usually accompanied by a complete rejection of Muse responsabilties. For Rogues, defiantely being themselves is a Page-flavoured rallying cry, and cutting anyone off is because they need to focus on helping the people they choose to *more*. Rogues may never know who they are until they pull everyone away from the world, throwing away all the rules and making new ones, but it is going through those paces that Priests are only <u>delaying</u> knowing themselves.

No seriously, if you read all of this, and no class stood out to you, and you're left going "I don't get it?", please check the mirror. I've had this conversation alot of times, and the ability to stare right in the face of one's habits and reputation, then come away with a blank look...well, with Rogues it's cute. With you guys, I get concerned (granted it's mostly Prospits, because of course it is). Everything mentioned so far is within the realm of "tame", but the capacity to go past this point and do some real fucking harm is always there. As for what KIND, that's up to the Priest in question.

FAE: As much as Priests have too many ideas that never get off the ground, that doesn't mean *they* won't get off the ground. Acting Maid-ish keeps Priests moving, and is a healthy state for them (so long as they don't tip over into Lord). Of course, the "living embodiment of their aspect, held together by beliefs so strong and saturated they seem alien"...well, Maids are pretty specific. They **create** more of

their aspect because they refuse to live life outside its terms, and often become busy workers in a career that suits their shtick. For a Priest, either capitalist domination becomes their shtick (expect lots of quotes from ancient warlords and emperors), or they try to go wild on *art*. Said art will be a lurid hodge-podge of personal childhood nostalgias, contrasting extremes of phillosophy, unrelated media references, outright plagiarism, their own personal existential ennui, some kind of commentary (or integration) of whoever the audience is, and the author themselves. It's everything at once, which ironically makes it easier to specify than any of the 12 aspects on their own. Yeah, Priests do have one in there, but whatever "aura" they give off through their work is always the Muse at play, and even that won't be completely obvious in their work.

I always told her to write short stories. It bothered her she never finished anything, that was obvious. She tried measuring success in word count, and she was venemous if I was anything less than impressed with her about it. Short stories would've been fine, but what is it with Priests getting caught up in these insane ideas of a magnum opus?

Sylphs are a stranger pick. Priests might lend a hand, or become overly-involved in certain contexts, but it's held back by all their other fun personality quirks we've gone over. The simutaneously stable and unstable high-energy of Sylphs is a peculiar thing, and even Princes flirting with inversion can't (or, more realistically, "won't") imitate their personality traits wholesale. On the rare occasions they do, this actually isn't that bad for them - I mean, it's obviously the Muse side more at play, but to resemble a Sylph is to be expressing enough of your vulernable inside to be transparent alongside the help, while the debt to others is "shaky" enough to be open for negotation instead of overwriting everything with Muse certainty. Sylphs have their own issues, true, but they're often doing better for themselves compared to Princes, all while being much easier to address and embrace that Prince side from personal growth. If a Priest really does look like a Sylph, it's probably best to give them a pat on the back and continue encouraging that behavior; no matter how easy it is to mishandle, a side of them truly does want to help.

Sylphiness is just coded too feminine for people. Course, there are still trans-Priests out there...they tend to worry less about that, and more about everything else in the world. You see it more then, even if it's a cross stitch of Pagey/Musey features. Priests really are at their best when they're disconnected from an obligation to male-coded behavior, and I think there's an important lesson that AMAB and AFAB classes don't change gender being a (very obtrusive) social construct.

ROYALS: In a certain regard, Priests reflect the most misguided ideals of a Prince in full form. Prospit Priests carry alot of "jollyness" that Prospit Princes would envy, and the need to prove that to everyone is either very elegant or almost forgotten; Derse Priests can embrace such a wider net of masks that their "reinventions" feel much more potent, when the signature aspect/self-identity is easier to

suppress. To resemble Princes *directly* however, we're talking about two different masks, much like with Thieves. The first is a methodical smartypants free of the constrictions of ideological delusions and distractions, here to instruct you on living an "objectively correct" existence, warning you of a "seductive evil thinking" boogeyman. This persona of efficient instructor can be invoked situationally, always accompanied by the inverted aspect flavouring whatever singular path the Priest has made for - because this is a flat Muse just the same as Princes misfire their Sylph side. This will be invoked situationally regardless of how bold or skittish the current mask is, as it's as essential to them as a Prince's conniptions. Yet, it is in resolving the argument inside that they try ("try") to skip the argument with others - Princes are obstinate and grumpy, Priests are suggestive and plastic. While this changes "tortured genius" into "bored genius", it's just a *numbed* discontent, and Priests are still prone to concoct insane leaps of logic and lying if they think they're losing you. The reason they're better at it is that they're less bound to something bigger, less aware of their accountability, more hypocritical in what's driving them - is this something to envy? Maybe all that insecurity serves a point: Princes know their own bullshit, and they're only infamously troublesome for trying to ignore it. Princes are (un)surprisingly qualified to know what it takes to be a good ruler, and while it's probably not them, it's *definitely* not Priests.

It's like a Prince of Heart, except more robotic and calculated. You know. In this fun hypothetical we're doing.

Honestly, Priests and Princes both have this annoying habit of going "Oh, so you're saying [insane claim], huh?" as a gotcha. I think it speaks to the Sylph and Muse side over-exaggerating someone else's words, and then the primary impulse being the reactive response. They're argumentative, but not convincing when you realize they're hinging so much on turning you into the only kind of strawman they know how to handle. Talk over someone all you want, it's only more obvious you aren't listening - more obvious you're arguing with yourself, terrified of something.

Of course, being "above" this maligned aspect is only presentation around someone trying to do it their way, and that agenda can't always be achieved through disguise or denial. When the ground feels like its slipping, when cheerful altruism and assurances isn't enough, Priests can manifest the starving obsession towards their primary aspect in a sustained breach of their established character and values. Dersites often present this behavior as a sort of supervillain performance art, and while Prospits may drift into moments of a casual unnerving sadism, both will show how serious it is when the threat of failing their goals is no longer possible to ignore. Whether to a group or a single person, authority must be established through fury and fear; that their personal interpretation of their aspect must be secured, no matter the cost, and no matter the well-being of those close. This is, in alot of ways, a more honest Priest than even a Faux-

Thief; their intensity of how destructive they see their aspect, how it resides within them, what they're willing to step over, it's all there. But as Princes **destroy** themselves, Priests are themselves **conquered**: they feel very small, unwanted, insignificant, invalidated, and unheard. Lashing out makes sense - it won't *help*, but it *feels* natural. It's a reflection of the honest, undisguised seduction to flatten everything that's ever got in their way without remorse, reconciliation, or regret - and if they're pissed off enough, it's unfiltered, and deeply disturbing. This is an immutable part of them, but it comes from loneliness and lacking the tools to validate themselves, not any kind of "innate evil"; it's also not the only part, they've still got a Muse's kindness, and either side is only as true as we make it. We'll talk more about this when we get to Inversion again, but it's important to recognize how truly inept we would be without it.

It's not just about demystifying them. It's not about getting back at them. It's not about feeling bigger and asserting a pecking order. It's not about humiliating those who hurt me (though I won't say it's not completely). The fact is, past it all, I feel sorry for Priests. I know lots of people say that as some kind of faux-forgiveness that swings back to "Oh, this is how you ACTUALLY hurt someone", but it's not an insult. Nobody asks for their classpect. I just want to help.

...oh put your hand down, *yes*, alot of prominent interpretations of the Joker count as a Priest of Rage, are you happy? There's too much extreme mythmaking around that though; Dutch of Red Dead provides a well rounded Prospit example, and I'd personally bet on Priest of Blood/Muse of Breath.

Less introspective than all of this is Bards, since that's less "adjacent to all the personal demons present in all walks of life" and more "pissing people off is funny". Priests who value stability may resemble a similar lackadasical attitude, but stray on direction. Bards are *very* talkative, especially when they shouldn't be; Priests attend their motives more directly, where rambling tangents is a distraction. Prospits might both have some casual complaining, but the Priests are trying to iron out legitimate irks and irritations, where Bards tend to talk for the sport of it. Dersites can both push jokes too far and veer into insensitive topics, but Derse Bards just sort of "even out" given enough time. Derse Priests converge towards an epiphany of realizing they're very empty inside, and being ironic and funny makes things more difficult to resolve. It's only a Maid's center that keeps Bards so self-assured, and Priests *are* their own center.

Malicious Priests are still prone to employ Bard-like traits in order to downplay consequences of their actions, or to cast doubt on competing sources of truth. Course, a real Bard of Rage argues for the sake of itself, and with a Maid of Hope's guidance; it's different if you're shutting out every truth but yourself for the sake of consolidating power. "Don't listen to the experts, only I know how the real world works".

The first time I posted this brochure to Reddit, someone said they identified with Bard beforehand but my stuff on Priests really shook them. I prodded them about it, but they ended with "Yeah probably Bard, nevermind." It wasn't a long conversation, but I'm not sure. Why would a Bard's faith in themselves hinge on labels?

MASTERS: Lords have a consistency to them - rain or shine, rich or poor, they take the world on their terms alone, with an uncomprimisingly strong self-identity. Driven by passions, most imagine a wide range of projects to pursue; while many are unrealistic or unfeesable, Lords may still reach those goals through determination or delusion, and those out of reach will remain in their minds for a long time. While Priests lack these boundless reserves of self-reliance (and are *anything* but consistent), it is in refusing to resolve their discontent *personally* that they try to reshape the world in their own petty image. Thus, the loudest, most dangerous, most delusional, and most truly fake mask of all: a singular visionary, total and absolute. Course, Lords can defuse, and even ambitious Priests may never have the opportunity to reach that high...but through enough vigor (or, more realistically, inheritance), you can with up with a ruthless autocrat, building their "magnum opus" while disdainful of any competing voice. The issue here is that we're measuring Lords against a power-hungry inverted Muse; the vibe they give off, the reason in their words, if they make it sound like it benefits you, it's still not what's driving them. What they fear, whatever they want *you* to fear, whatever is the opposite end of the axis to the aspectbound stereotypes they're displaying, *that* is the true driving force - this is just a Priest who's as far from admitting that as possible.

Look, seriously, if you're a Priest (or Lord?) who made it this far, thank you, but I need you to emotionally detach here. We're talking some SERIOUS live wires here. If it seems a far cry from yourself, *good*. Just don't get complacent...or, stay complacent, I guess?

As previously stated, Lords are *consistent*: if their self-aggrandizing gets out of hand, everything else follows in equal measure. Rage, heartbreak, joy, irritation, sympathy, bigotry, genuine poetry or bile - all genuine, all uncensored, all a part of their cohesive(?) worldview. Contrasting that, faux-Lord Priests are dependent on their audience, and their most genuine moments are often alarmingly materialistic or cold; they're prone to confess something egregious, then surgically double-back to try and smooth it out. Yes, Lords have their own double-think, making either class excellent con-artists, but one specializes in confidence and the other in artistry. Lords are often an unfiltered stream of consciousness, and even a defter hand still draws from their gut instincts as a primary source of "intuition" and "experience". Contrasting that, faux-Lord Priests veer in the other direction, gesturing outwards at famous figures or some dictionary definition of "happiness" and "success". Both have ulterior motives, but one overflows with ideas where the other is a hollow vacuum - Lords overpower and double down, but Priests pivot, erapture, sweet talk. Sure, they always contradict themselves eventually, lie about

something too obvious or forget a previous lie...but the longer they talk, the more they get their hooks in. To say nothing of value, but everything you want to hear.

Eemember how I mentioned Johnny Silverhand? Put him next to Saburo Arasaka, tell me who's the Lord. Really, if we're using the stock classes Hussie put in front of us, how do you reconcile the two? Cause both talk *alot* about immortality...

Both will screw you over, but a Lord's betrayals are brief excursions from their personal story; a Priest may firmly think it really *isn't* about them, but at this level the doublethink ensures it always will be. They're even worse than Lords at admitting fault; they can't defer to experts, can't admit they don't know something, can't let a competitor (or collaborator) outshine them, and they can't admit even the *tiniest* mistake. It's always someone else's fault, or "didn't happen", or "more complicated than that" (it's not), and any recording will prove them a liar. Sure, their lies are better than "NO I DIDN'T", but a Lord's impulsive lies and denials are because they only need to convince themselves - intricacy is a Priests downfall, as there are limits to building multiple houses of cards with every new person you meet. Every misstep or accusation requires more excuses for anyone still listening, bloating into an increasingly isolated delusion; the **only** voice of reason, the **only** one who gets it, telling you not to trust anyone or anything outside their bubble, lest you be "manipulated" and led astray. If you're that removed from reality, you can't correctly interact with it, resulting in failure which only begets more delusion and more failure. If anyone disentangles from their orbit, Priests only put more pressure on whoever's left, desperate to not lose their remaining sources of validation. **Ultimately, Priests have a dependency to others for feeling "normal" no matter what their state of egomania. Lords lack the tools or self-awareness to stop people leaving, and won't miss a beat until literally everyone is gone**. It's a doomed effort for Priests to try and sustain this kind of audience, but enough capital or die-hard supporters will let them lash out for a lifetime, rather than cut their losses and be *happy*.

Ego from Guardians of the Galaxy 2 was always...uncomfortably familiar. We see how readily he rewrites his world from the slightest inconvience, and how full of himself he is. He is desperate to not be alone - but the legitimate connection, the **dependency** he was growing towards Quill's mom scared him so much he burned it out, lest it threaten his worldview (Mind? Maybe). He'll be, do, and say anything to keep your attention (besides apologize), and write his world any way he wants to draw you in and make you submit to his dogma. A more human example would be Jonas Venture (Rage), with both shining as awful fathers. Still, both feel like the Prospit varients. You want a Derse one?

Doc Scratch.

English might've been made of the same components, and shown the intent, but Scratch is all the personality and justifications - all the undermining, all the disarming, all the absolutes. It's...well, familiar. To me, sure. Maybe you know someone personally, or are a Derse Priest and have been that cruel before (if so, thanks for sticking with this

despite the clear lack of flattery). But you catch Hussie's public statements and the workplace confessions that get out...hell. "Symphony of Desolation". It all lines up too well.

...and we've finally come full circle: what actually makes Priests appear as Muses? Their second half? Of course we've established that, we knew that, but its Priests themselves who so frequently don't. Often the closest they come is in resembling Rogues, Seers, or Sylphs, but none of that was ever true - just tricks of the light, just moments of fluctuation. Priests will always have a pull to be everything to everyone, but this itself is not a curse, destiny, brain damage (probably), and certainly not universal; they are simply the side of Muses that has standards of dignity for themself. To be anything we've listed is only to admit how truly scared they are of the outside world, how much they'll strike back at everything they perceive as an attack. To be *truly* Muse-like, a Priest is furthest from the flatly wrong conclusion that "power" will fix themselves. A Prospit Priest's tranquil calm isn't all some treacherous facade to lull you into a false sense of security - or at least, it doesn't *have* to be. A Derse Priest's self-critical anxieties isn't all hesitation to inevitable and evil predation - or, again, it doesn't *have* to be. These are reflections of a completely genuine ability to reflect, to champion, to agree, to cherish, to deify and love others devoutly. Everything else we've discussed is the wide swath of decisions a Priest can take to do something *besides* that - and they always had a choice. Abstaining is valid, but if any of us are going to choose who we *want* to be, we have to come to terms with these feelings of who we *have* to be.

Transwomen who are Priests (again, alot, not all, don't @ me) can adopt Muse mannerisms near flawlessly, only being a little more fidgity. They generally don't before transitioning (societal pressure, I'd imagine), but that's the nature of Priests - malleability. I mean it's truly not a mask, it's just inversion, everyone does that. Derse Priests trust it less, but that anxiety doesn't mean it's fake. They seem happier. Feels like the biggest problem is Lords and Faux-Lords are both coded pretty masculine in the collective consciousness. Ugh. People make too big a deal over gender, I swear to god, just move the fuck on.

INVERSION (PAYOFF): It's time for a motherfucking redemption arc.

PRIESTS AND MUSES are not evil people, and never have been. Dangerous, sure. Absoultely. 100%. Perhaps a subjective evil under certain contexts and you are free to not forgive them. But there is no such thing as inevitable evil, of immutable sin, of this measure of a soul. They are individuals saddled with an arrangement of beliefs that pushes them into titanic absolutes, and gives them the *capability* to be natural manipulators - even then, this is no irreconcilable anamoly of psyche or power, no less mundane than the people listed thus far, dramatic titles and flair notwithstanding. It is the Muse who gives everything to others, and who excercises the Priest impulse as their

single role to play in everyone else's show; it is the Priest who so often fears this pull to others, and excercises their will lash back at a world they *believe* expects everything of them. Look, there's enough Muses of contradicting religious faiths, working within an aspect framework, that they have to understand no one's actually *forcing* them to do anything. Just as well for Priests, even if they project that as this pull as something material or universal. Synthesizing these two impulses is not about pushing Priests *entirely* into their Muse side, just as much as it isn't about asking Muses to go full spite all the time - it is, however, about avoiding making other people dependent on your words, spinning them around your orbit. There is a miscommunication at work, it doesn't have to be that way, and I will do my best to help you see that. Ultimately, the choice to take my advice, or anyone else's, is yours. You've always had a choice, and you have my sincere sympathies if it seemed like you didn't. That wasn't your fault, someone probably made you feel like it was, but taking accountability for the life you have now, and your ability to help people, feels important.

It's frustrating that every Priest has their own rationalization for why they are the way they are. Narcassism, sociopathy, autism, schizotypal, multiple personality disorder...okay I really don't believe that one, but the guy who said it believed it. Classes don't match personality disorders, there's too many cases of mismatches and exceptions...but I also don't know if every single Priest's ennui can be attributed purely to being a Priest. I'm not a psychologist. Not everyone talks enough. It's frustrating. If any of this stuck, please talk to a professional.

One aspect **conquered**, one **commanded** - so absolute, and so far from control. This is just brain chemistry, just sensation, just assumption. The Muse impulse is not a divine obligation to every soul on earth, not any actual "sixth sense" to the universe's secrets, and not some great superpower to control others wills - it can only *appear* as these things, be *believed* as those things, and either embraced or rejected as both the weilder and reciever choose. Just as well, the Priest impulse does not define the person as some fixed function, or imperator of mankind, or subhuman waste - again, it just tends to feel like that. Take a step back, and this isn't any different from Princes and Sylphs failing to harmonize by weaving the active aspect into the passive without admitting it, poisoning a true capacity to help. Take another step back, and see how Thieves and Knights show how the two impulses allow a comfortable retreat when protest or protection run us ragged. Bring it back all the way, and see how this isn't fundamentally different than a Witch's personal fun and a Seer's conceptualization of others - just so much *louder*, so much more *volitile*. An active impulse is not the individual; it is simply the allotment of aspect to justify and motivate personal interests and expressions. A passive impulse, likewise, reflects the rest of that allotment, justifying and motivating our role to others. None of this is about burning, dominating, or uniting the whole world; nobody *knows*

the whole world, we barely know our fucking neighbors. These extremes of intensity simply fail to balance themselves out, where so long as either side is rejected, contempt fills the empty space - and for Priests, they can easily fail to believe both their aspects. All we've got, if you strip away the pizazz, is someone who wants a little for themselves, and wants alot for the people around them. You can have that little without trying to mix it into what you think is big.

...Look Command anc Conquer is a good video game series, but that's not why - forget it.

It is not the ability to imagine oneself as the great conductor of the lost masses that makes you one - it doesn't even mean you'll be *good* at it. The reason Priests and Muses push themselves to these points is because they so often fail to see merit, fail to see *beauty* in their other aspect; to lash out at the world, or themselves; to serve the world (explicitly), and/or themselves (implicitly). Perhaps this gradiosity can serve a purpose, but it is not their *only* purpose like the Priest impulse would so desperately wish for. It really is just those certain breeds of neutral, calm Prospit Priests who show what it's like to harmonize both aspects: raw contentment in both sides, supportive, distractible, a bit of a yes-man, and personally satisfied by nothing but a funny movie and a fidgit spinner. Yes, they will still be attuned to the people in front of them and walk back on alot of things, but that's part of the deal - the Muse impulse is an ocean, and the Priest impulse is the anchor. You will *always* care a great deal what other people think of you, and the ability to say a flat "No" to <u>any</u> of that is not some destiny to reject <u>all</u> of it. You just need to find what works for you, set reasonable goals, and balance that against the rest. Muses tell everyone they'd be better off without them, Priests struggle to control the narrative and everyones attention, but both of these are missteps from someone striking at the other part of themselves - and *yes*, your <u>*perception of people*</u> only belongs to <u>*you*</u>. Every speech or assessment comes from <u>*you*</u>, and that *never* meant you were a genius empath or god's chosen - just prone to assumptions. Take a breath, settle down, and focus on friends. You don't need to manipulate them so they won't leave, or leave them because you think they should/will. You're okay. You're enough. Don't doubt people who say so, and don't keep measuring yourself to strangers or "society". You can sing their praises, but you have to write your own story.

Hi. I'm not a Priest. But as a Page of Time, I feel I have to understand at least a little of what it's like to have the top adaptive/destructive impulse. That's why I wrote what I did back at the Author introduction thing, about personal poetry instead of manuscripts. What I'm trying to say with that is, I think our reactivity to the world, this violence, comes from not knowing ourselves enough. We shouldn't think that being king of the world, of making everyone else pay, of getting our way every time would do anything. Resolving discontent with violence can feel good contextually, but it leaves you with more discontent, and violence was never the only option anyways.

I'm of the opinion that Buddhist-Spacebound withdrawl has its place contextually (and i mean rogue of space so duh), but that it's still important to address what situations we feel are worth asserting our will over, competing over, overcoming through determination. It's just...we decide what is and isn't a problem, you know? Just like Heart needs to choose what emotions define it, and Light needs to choose what meanings it holds to, Time has to decide what irritates you enough to be deemed injustice - because justice is personal, irritations are fleeting, and you gotta know that. I'm obviously interested in changing people, but (surprisingly) I was worse when I didn't have classpects. It's in understanding and empathy that we learn not just what can't be changed, but what we don't want to. People are people. Everyone's got opinions. Not all of them matter, or affect you, or are even wrong. You look outside yourself, and you start *being* things that aren't yourself. Alot of people go looking for a fight because they don't feel validated - "it's not winning unless someone else loses", I suppose. But you need to set your own goalposts. The far end of things is raw Space where you live in complete contentment and isolation from the world. That's boring. But you have to have some things where you alone hold the power to decide it's "right" and "correct" enough for <u>you</u>. Something to fall back on, compared to the other things we wager in arguments trying to change people's minds.

I'm certainly trying to change people's minds here, and have been for awhile. I've gotten somewhere. A few tearfelt praises I'm really proud and surprised of. But a good chunk of my friends agree with what I write, but just don't want to encourage me. It hurts. I wouldn't mind proving some of them wrong and getting my way. But writing all this is comforting in the routine, in proving it all to myself. I like feeling like what I've done matters, and I've personally decided this matters. I can't (or at least won't) do that with everything, but I can't shove it down everyone else's throat until I've "forced" it to matter to them. It probably wouldn't, and I'd only appear - and be - more fragile.

It still feels like all the insane world-domination stuff Priests either joke about, long for, or disasterously chase is just...well alot of it is Muse-isms, obviously. That you're helping people, that you're doing it for them - like I've said, this isn't inherently wrong. It's just the Priest aspect in isolation that I don't think *has* to go down that road. It's a small flickering flame of self-interest, and, if its anything like the flames with Time, you just gotta come to terms with it. Have some fun. Not be worried about who will judge you for it. Self-interest should be judged by the self, and not mythologized until you aren't even doing things you *want*, compared to what you think you're "supposed" to want. It's that smallness, and the Muse aspect's worldly longings, that I think makes the common problem, when it makes more sense that the Muse aspect simply helps you accept everything outside your personal joys - neither has to attack the other, they just fill the empty space. Hopefully, this will help make it easier to deal with. Ideally. Please see a therapist regardless.

But if you *do* want some outside validation, I'm gonna do the best I can.

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Sage among the simple; shepherd to the sheep; mortal surrounded by Gods - either wreathed or would-be. The adventures of those empowered and enamoured all shift reality to meet them, all schism long before they practice praxis and participate in the grand paradox. To you, the true essence of what makes myth is unambiguous at the price of privilege; cosmic song corroded, necrotic and embeded. Spurned by circumstance, setting up shop with sermons, serendipitous, serene, is the Siphon; the Witness; the Interpreter; the Priest. Pulled in every direction but unable to reach, you preach; purpose in the paper, a blueprint within the manuscript, a Heaven on Earth with a role for every god - but with Author as architect, the true throne is hidden in Hell. To harmonize with a song not your own, to chain them in binds they cannot feel, you hold power unchallenged and unstated -

temporarily. A Priest draws strength from gods, but to control them is to convince them they are not divine. The destiny you sell cannot compare to the truths burning in their heart: power and potential that breaks the limits of your prose, too wild and willful to serve as a battery. In denying their purpose, you deny yours - God of Gods, yes, but as deferential, not director. With pen, you write prayer; in the face of the impossible, you ascribe intent; in the chaos, in the cosmic, reflections only hide your voice - the true mortal. As Kingdoms rise and fall and war in battles of belief, you see it all except for your place among them, when the answer was always with you. Stop looking for a centerpiece - there is no center. Everyone is their own center. So go be yours.

"Absence diminishes little passions and increases great ones, as wind extinguishes candles and fans a fire." - Walt Whitman

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SCRIBES are difficult to describe without offense. A medley of traits associated with multiple passive classes, drawn to excitement and new ideas, all run on a very short fuse; likely to say they “won’t be pushed around anymore”, and likely to have pasts where they were. They champion people they care about, becoming fans to their creative projects or life story, priding themselves on understanding and empathy. Scribes have a proclivity to healing (or at least “progress”), doing what they can to make conclusions on what can be learned (or who should be blamed) for all misfortune that finds them or their group. Inbetween academic curiosity and mischief, Scribes delve into lots of topics many would consider sensitive or off-limits, and often struggle with understanding why they should apologize. They’re direct, optimistic, playful, bold, but this engine locked at 11 quickly runs out of fuel; frequent burnouts, a “lack of spoons”, swimming out to save the drowning but rarely having the strength to swim back. Temper exasperates issues, with a thin line between ultimate empath and irritated apathy - their cheerful smiles can dissipate from one wrong move, and their support comes at the price of working within their frameworks. Scribes underestimate the threat of these resentments and overestimate their follow-through, frequently overpromising before their original motive evaporates. They are rarely fond to have this pointed out to them, and are likely to downplay these qualities into things that everybody experiences or specific to a particular quirk of their life...but the dynamics they

cultivate and chase are identifiable. Others could point it out best for them, but Scribes have a bad habit of trying to figure out what everyone else is thinking without letting anyone else talk.

From the Priest section, it should be clear how I believe a bulk of the comic is dedicated to Hussie's exploration of their class. Of course, it is still quite likely they silently decided on the name of "King", and as this is the AFAB paired class to that AMAB one, "Queen" feels almost obligated. Now I've already made it clear I disagree with the heirarchy and gendering of the names, but whether you like them or not, Homestuck's overabundence of chess imagery is more evidence on Hussie's part; after all, we ARE closing up with a total of 16 archetypes. Of course, that would be a rather narcassistic way to organize personality types: Priests and Scribes can hold a great deal of prescence and influence, but not always, and certainly not with the implication that only they have the capability to do so. Alongside the alarming amount of classes this would now qualify as "pawns", the comparison only becomes more gross the more it's considered. The classpect system works well when everyone is a hero in their own right; I imagine Hussie understood part of that, but patted themself on the back too hard for what they wanted *their* right to be. If you want to organize your friends to the board, I'd reccomend voting in who you want to be a monarch, but you don't even have to do that.

The reason I'm bringing this up is because, assuming these classes *do* correlate to the Prospit and Derse chess kingdoms, even a little, Hussie may have actually demonstrated this particular class after all, right in plain sight.

Scribes have their personality, politics, irritations and anecdotes all smushed together into a single worldview - yet, this isn't their focus. Their pride in understanding "how the world works" is glossed over, while they aim their efforts in deciding The Only Correct Things To Enjoy/Believe And How To Correctly Enjoy/Believe In Them. This is a notch of intensity past Bards, and it's not too difficult to see how this overly-assured contrarian behavior mimics the "fuzzy" utopias and high standards Bards circle around...but we're past arguments, aren't we? Scribes **conquer** their aspect in the name of others, deciding a firm (and often *alarmingly* fatalistic) interpretation of those values that they expect everyone can and should follow. While this can be seen as "case-closed", exploring their aspect as a science does have a thrill to it - but it's also more obvious than Bards when they're veering to the conclusions they prefer. It's an open forum with wrong answers, and them suddenly clamming up and changing the subject is usually the only clean exit they have that doesn't involve bile. A Scribe's aspect is, well, "tricky"; it's the only theory entertained, the only words you're allowed to use, the thing you're already wrong about, what you won't bring up if you're a "real friend", a dry resignation, a peaceful stalemate, a hostage situation, a clinical definition of good and evil (mostly evil), the last compromise they can give, a suspiciously long reprieve, a first and last attempt, and a perception of the world that reflects the Scribe's personal gripes far more than it does any kind of unifying wisdom - and who said it couldn't be?

I'm 70% certain Snowman/Black Queen is a Scribe - or, fine, Hussie would've called it the Queen class, there's still to many gender questionings out there and this class especially is pretty prickly on that stuff (and everything) so I'm keeping my names. But Snowman DID display Mind-y powers (Page 3840-3847, in the header). Now I ain't saying she

couldn't be one of the other classes, or some class-less mind avatar, but...she *is* forcing everyone else's actions into a brick ceiling of cause/effect just by existing, isn't she? Like if you try to do anything else, no, the universe fucking dies, correct? Like even if you don't like the verb "conquer", this is definately the most Time-Reactive-Adaptation essential inevitability of super destruction? I mean there's forcing Jack into those stupid hats too.

Look, theory aside, these are real people - though I am certainly more twitchy in regards to a sensation that I can't talk about something. Sometimes it does *feel* like the whole universe will explode if I do. And I can't live like that. And it's cost me. But it's better than living in constant suspense, even if that is just my BPD talking.

Like Priests, the most stable and agreeable Scribes do and say little of substance, but this is less ignorance of their ugly side and more fatigue with it. While zealously proclaiming all of their (very personal) insights is thrilling, it's likely to either lose them friends in explosive confrontations or people simply avoiding them altogether. Trying to self-depricate, shrug, and fall back on the Bard's lazy smile is an option, but even then there's so much less defence for something to irk them into action. It is far more tempting for Scribes to simply push forward and believe that everyone agrees with them because everyone's given up trying to change their mind, all while the information they present becomes highly susceptible to misinformation and guesswork - and again, *rarely fond of having that pointed out*. There are individuals Scribes will defer to, but this extreme loyalty can be obsessive, unhealthy, and snap beyond repair from one argument. Scribes can be aware of their issues, but they have a glacial rate of self improvement, insisting friends wait up and believe in them for deadlines that still go missed - again once more, *rarely fond of having that pointed out*. While this isn't a complete no-win situation, it's been engineered to always feel that way; Scribes are a passive class with the most hyper-specific and personal interpretation of how other people should behave. There are no clean solutions here, where even goofing off or secluding just starves the part of themselves that wants justice. Solutions, however, are not the (primary) point of this document; identification is, and we will do just that, before making the best conclusions we can with the information available, while the final say remains with the individual.

I don't expect to make friends with this one. In fact, I'm expecting very little. I've had plenty of Scribes look over what I wrote, and while there's either shrugs or excitement at the other entries, this is always the one that hits close to home - so you know, I'm doing something right. A familiar answer I've gotten is "You're just talking about AFABs with [x] mental disorders", because they have that disorder, and that's how they define themselves, and Scribes love those definitions. Look, I've met Witches with ADHD, Thieves and Mages with autism, and I'm a Page with both; classes just don't match up with disorders 1-1, even if there are some familiar combinations. I'm not a therapist. Neither are most Scribes. It's never stopped them from yelling in my ear about this stuff - hell, one freaked out and told me to delete everything I wrote and never tell anyone. I'm not going to do that. I know who that benefits. And I still did have one who read over all the same stuff and said "It's harsh, but true". Lost her in a couple weeks too, just cause I said "Scribes are AFAB" more firmly than I should have. Then it was every argument I warned about. Maybe all those warnings only matter to non-Scribes. Maybe just me.

If this sounds like you, don't waste your time writing a thesis on why I'm a danger to society and a dogshit human being. You're not going to bring anything to the table I haven't heard before. You're a cliche. So am I. I'm still trying to help, but I will admit yours is the class I have the most trouble with. Like I've said, I've lost enough trusted friends over the years that, at this point, I just try to avoid them wholesale. If you're a friend of a Scribe, I'm not saying you can't be. I am not without bias. That doesn't mean I'm writing fiction that can be written off entirely. You can have some answers without having all the answers. You can have enough of an understanding to act upon it, within reason - reason we decide. I hope you can see that. This is still an appeal. You don't have to take it. Doesn't mean I'm wrong - especially if the only metric is needing to convince you.

Prospit Scribes carry themselves with a graceful calm, but you don't have to know them long to realize it's more accurate to call them "unimpressed". They're here to help, at least always initially; moments of kindness, generosity and mischief can turn sour quickly if they don't get a positive reaction. Even their Scribey judgements and theories aren't really defended in the moment, only carried with a "take it or leave it" dispassion where it's not clear if anything actually changed their mind. Prospit Scribes are prone to responses of "Okay", "Sure", and "Alright", when you've definately disappointed or offended them in some way, and that they'll definitely mention when you're not in the room. Still, while this makes them the least malleable, they're more likely to avoid people they deem unpleasant rather than confront them - though if they do, it's fairly merciless. Trying to call out injustice, to make sense of the universe, to prove they've got what it takes...well, it sounds good one paper, sure. In practice, no matter how well the intentions or how beautiful the presentation, a reliance on "gut instinct" will push them further and further from practicality and understanding; their own path is mythologized, and an excitement propping others up is tempered by distaste if they ever step out of line. This "enforced peace" is still the deathly precarious ten-tons-of-TNT-waiting-for-a-spark it always was, and will continue to be unless Prospit Scribes remedy longstanding self-loathing. Even if they do, you're more likely to get a Scribe who learns to let things go and promise less, but at least they'll be less incensed by any disappointment that evokes.

Not sure what you could say of Homestuck's Questant...or maybe Hussie's experience was better than mine, or maybe she wasn't meant to be. Regardless, I've known *plenty*, and it always ended poorly. One's still around in my circle. We were close for awhile. Then we weren't. I'm still around if they need anything, and I told them that. I don't think it matters to them. I've met others growing up, and I don't matter to them much either these days. I don't have much else to say.

I'd rather not get into media examples just yet. Prospits especially vary a bit.

Derse Scribes have a mirthful, oddball energy, which either accents or distracts from their conniptions to set the world straight, and decide an academic definition of good, evil, the meaning of life, and smugly snark at anyone who disagrees with it. In the case of the former, you've got the most ruthless and inquisitive Scribe possible, pinballing around a hundred topics at once, curious at others input

while definately still ready to snap if they can't make sense of another's stance. Dishing out "facts-of-life" while trying to verbally crucify those they disagree with is unstable, but the interest in arguing it at all means they do come closer to practical help and problem solving. Yet, it is in the latter case where Derse Scribes pull on Bard strengths; cheerfully sinking into self-deprecation, admitting their frequent uncertainty, and circling exciting personalities with their own (knowingly obtrusive) signature of cherishment. Ridiculing the existence of their feelings helps cope with difficulty keeping them under control, where temper can be entertained in the moment but knowingly discarded (or supressed) in the knowledge that they are an outlier. Still, even if it's with laughs and shrugs, they're still entirely capable of burning as many bridges as any Scribe, while shutting out the part they had to play in it. No matter how nervous they are about their instincts, it's exceedingly difficult for them to trust alternatives if they feel cornered - but questioning *why* they so often feel cornered is harder than it looks.

I have known a great deal of Derse Scribes in my life. Usually pretty close. One's still around, though they're completely burnt out of talking about Homestuck or classpects ever again - would you like to guess why? The rest...ah, hell. Look I can't pretend I'm an easy person to get along with, and my preferences and relationships shouldn't be used as a measuring stick for "agreeable-disagreeable" people. You know, in a clinical sense. I mean I can't pretend I haven't made my mind up, I just know how far that takes me. I'm just so far past giving any amount of trust to these people. I still like alot of them, I like the banter, but it always went down the same way. Maybe I could help provide options to someone if I'm not actually close to them. Or maybe, like I said before, it's just for me. I don't know. I'm tired. But I'll keep trying.

Media examples are actually easier here. Chie from Persona 4 is pitch perfect, and Kez from Infinity Train seems about right too. I originally referenced Zoe from Monster Prom as a Prospit example, but she probably belongs here. In case you haven't noticed, my real life sources of information are difficult to talk to. Wasn't sure what marked a Prospit or Derse variant at first...christ, I prefer Priests on that front.

INVERISON (PRELUDE): As you might've worked out through the proccess of elimination, Scribes are the passive inversion to the Lord class - which is not flattering. A Lord's passive side provides the snap judgements, tentative tutoring, and contradictory justifications that support their enlarged ego. Flip that around, and you have someone *legitimately trying* to be an unbiased beacon of wisdom, while still powered by an unstoppable entitlement to trust their initial instincts over everything and everyone else. Scribes have very firm ideas on their personal identity, but as the *inverted* aspect, it's usually not a pretty picture - and even if it is, it's a moot point next to their fixation on trying to understand the world and cherish very particular people in that world. All that "no-nonsense life advice" is the prime objective now, but Scribes still have a Lord's temper, deified just the same into not taking responsibility for it. Lords fixate on "You have to love what I love", where Scribes veer to "You have to hate what I hate" - it's the same shtick, but it also speaks to a Scribe's central identity tied to

this conquered, fragile aspect that lets them down as much as Priests. Scribes are the side of Lords that can express hurt, longing, inferiority, and trust...but to have that critiqued or questioned invites even more hostility. They're backed into the same corner they'll back anyone else into, pushed by an active impulse still demanding attention and praise. Scribes are a helluva' lot easier to spot than Priests, but the trickiest class to argue with - and again, not for any flattering reason like being "too smart".

"BABE WHY DID YOU MAKE ME HIT YOU"

It's the same thing. Of course it is. I mean I already mentioned how much shit Lords get up to. Not all of them. But enough to make a pattern. Scribes have cleaner records, but there's still all the little shit - and sometimes, very not so little shit. I could list everything I've seen, the ways it's all gone down, though I know that's coloured by my own perception. At this point, Scribes in my vicinity make me tense, remembering everything else I've lost. I've been overly suspicious. But between Lords, Scribes, Priests, and Muses, we've got all the Tier 4 classes assembled - and none of them are great with nuance. Me, I'm just a Page of Time; violence and confonrtation are baked into me, and I'm just trying to do it the best way I can. With Scribes, that's usually "never". So long as it is, so long as I have to keep my guard up and watch everything I say and micromanage their emotions 24/7, it's always going to go to hell eventually. What happens, happens.

DISCREPANCIES: Scribes have an incredibly fluid sense of identity (if not *expression*), and a penchant for latching on to shiny things as much as Priests. This habit of saying "I get it" when they don't get it, of trying to finish someone's sentences incorrectly...well, naturally, they probably already have opinions of what class they are, and are twice as likely to say they're some variation of "non-applicable". If we're being entirely honest, their most convincing argument for being another class is simply the confidence they display in justifying it to others, and not their actual mannerisms. Priests are fluid like still water, quietly seeping into cracks and reflecting back what they see - Scribes are more of a river rapid, too frantic to hold shape. A pinnacle of adaptation, of individual will over sanctified whole, they cultivate the image of themselves without precedent or tradition...but if you only pick the parts of the blueprints you like, the result has a tendency to topple, or at least fail to resemble anything conventional. In short, this isn't tense detective work: this is just a reminder that classpects are binding delusions that help and harm, not some funny hat to amuse yourself with.

With everything they're likely to have gone through, I'm sure an argument is "No, I have to be X class but hardened by trauma." Unfortunately, classpects ARE our trauma.

PROPHETS: Mages are literally the furthest thing from Scribes, which has been reflected in this document itself. The nature of inversion does make for a bit of confusion though: a backseat Lord impulse can be treated with enough mundanity to resemble a Mage's faith in themself, just as a Scribe's tumultuous appeals with others can resemble the Mage's iffy and situational Heir habits. Of course, a

Scribe who's self aware that people aren't always going to like what they're selling is still a Scribe, passive class, very interested in selling their ideas to at least *someone*, rather than find fulfillment acting upon those ideas. Just as well, Mages actually do have modesty; they're unyieldingly stubborn about *very particular and personal* beliefs/hunches, and very aware that avoiding people makes those goals easier. It's not that they don't care about telling you why you're wrong, it's that they do not care to *investigate* if you are wrong or not, because the outcome of that investigation does not affect their affairs - at least, according to Mages. Scribes dipping into these habits are just too damn smug about "forgiving you for your ignorance", and thinking a Mage title would justify that behavior is the kind of vanity real Mages are incapable of. If nothing else, a Scribe who *can* live comfortably with their personal ideology is at least making use of the Lord impulse, but that's still less Mage "this competing information vexes me, I'm not convinced" and more "you're wrong because I just know, I've got super great intuition on these things".

Double inverse and all that. I understand I ~~stole~~borrowed Muelin's half-title, but I was running out of words as is. I still really like the idea of the written word to contrast a Master's music, and you could keep that gimmick if you personally choose to fall back on the King/Queen dynamic I'm still fairly certain Hussie implied - or whatever third option you came up with, so long as we're clear we're all talking about class #16, Lord inverse.

I did mention awihle ago that Meulin does display an erratic Magehood I've only seen situationally in real life - Heir side gets pent up, I suppose. Even then, I think the information above still establishes what she is and isn't.

For the same reason, "Seer" doesn't really fit either. Between Prospit Scribes who say what's on their mind once and don't explore further, and the Derse Scribes who actively ridicule themselves, being an "investigative seeker of unbiased truth" is surprisingly contextual for Scribes. Real Seers are very adaptable, to the point that even their Witchy side is more flavour than it is fallback. Weaving between wills and exploring the world is all very low-upkeep for them, which is mostly because of the single most important difference between Seers and Scribes: neutrality. Scribes can look and listen as long as they want, but the interest in defining "indefensible acts" and writing off anyone who argues for them is a signature move. Seers are driven to examine people and their actions from a multitude of different perspectives, to the point that their actual disagreements can become buried in the name of principle - not the flat silence of a Scribe stuffing back hellfire, but the distantly aformentioned issue of Seers hanging around really sketchy people and condoning far too much. The more you line up personal lives and patterns, the less any of this sticks, and absolutely needing definitive answers (especially on simple titles) is one more Scribe signature. Look, neither class is about some innate "intelligence", they just measure beliefs: how you process it,

value it, preach it, that's all that's going on here. Seers have a reputation for accuracy because their beliefs are less likely to interfere with information, even if there's *always* a bias in organizing and positioning it. The more you look for flat "right/wrong good/evil", it just makes it more *obvious* what that bias is.

You want to be a bastion of knowledge, I made sure this name works for that too. You just don't get fluttery prophetic visions and hunches - you get stone and papyrus. According to me. It is meant with the best of intentions.

Had a long argument with someone who introduced themselves as a Seer of Void. They were insistant. They were equally insistant when they retook the extended zodiac test a day after meeting me and got "Mind". Like...like the same argument of "no this is TOTALLY who i am you're not LISTENING you don't KNOW MY STORY" to two entirely different aspects. I mean that speaks for itself, really. With what I had written, they were a kid in the candy store saying "Am I a Mage or Seer!? :D Both fit???", cherry-picking sentences I wrote while refusing to read the second or third paragraphs; I sent them my early draft of Scribes and got "You're just describing AFABs with mental disorders. >:|"...and I hope I've explained enough to show why that was a pretty definitive self-checkmate. Like I said at the start of this document, every nerve pinched is one more hint to what your class is. Truth be told, I can believe they're a Scribe of Void - would make sense if there's a Lord of Light kicking in the back, writing a thesis for why I'm a narrow-minded bigot oppressing their basic humanity with my backwards views. I've kept that conversation saved. I'm not an easy person to get along with. But I know Scribes.

In in the interest of fairness, Kankri does muddle things a little. His Seer qualities are there, but Blood's obsession with suffering and oaths makes him more accusing and intervening to his friends...aaaaaaand he's also 50% meme. Really, as a living parody of "SJW" rant-lecture types, this all segways into something I've been dancing around: Scribes are probably the main contributor to that stereotype. I'm sure a few Sylphs, Pages, and even Seers have contributed to that, but even then the bulk is just the usual crypto-fascists trying to demoninize left wing politics. I've met right-wing Scribes, there aren't any rules on who goes where, trust me.

MAGICIANS: The Witch staple of "playful fun that can fall apart when pushed too hard against reality" *does* have some commonality to compare. However, a Witch's aspect and identity are a personal one, balanced to a Seer's idle co-existence and calm curiosity; Witches might think they are trouble, but they are not *looking* for trouble. Witches can surf the wills of others without ever giving the inclination they'd protest, and even snapping into the Witch-Spiral-Speech(tm) rarely errs from the central justification of "You'll be better off without me". As we've gone over, the Scribe staple is grinding conversations to a halt to decide what is and isn't valid, and trying to let things go is difficult - just a few more pushes (real or imagined) and we're on to the Scribe-Spite-Speech(tm) of "You just hate me for having an opinion". A Witch's personal opinions may struggle to be argued against others, but they also never <u>have</u> to be; even a Witch's closest confidants will rarely know all their true thoughts and hidden agendas, and Witches themselves frequently prefer it that way. Scribes don't do things halfway, and trying to play themselves off or withdraw from the world is usually because there's burned bridges in recent memory. Like with Priests and Princes, a more malleable interpretation of oneself doesn't change how much Scribes have in

common with Bards, and that's really the more apt comparison for their brand of mischief and the purpose underlying it.

I have trouble telling these two apart online. In real life, it's no contest, Scribes have a particular body language and moments of impulse, but it all gets fuzzier if they have time to collect themselves and type. Prospit Scribes and Prospit Witches blur in withdrawl, always not saying *something*. I mean I get Witches, but I've been thrown off a few times realizing that I've caught a Scribe in the same dance, whose getting increasingly irritated at not knowing the moves. They don't like losing, and too often everything is seen as a competition. I've made it no secret I like hanging around Witches - they're fun. Cute. But they're playing their own games, and if you aren't paying attention, you won't notice how often they make sure they win no matter what you do.

Scribes and Heirs mark the ends of the passive-adaptation branch - new perspectives, constructive criticism, collective problem solving. With everything described however, it should be clear why Scribes are very much their own class (and certainly not *addicted* to discontent and people problems). We can all envy an Heir whose wise guiding hand makes people look to them naturally and without contest, but that's ignoring the drawbacks and collateral. Heirs frequently mistrust their friends capabilities to the point of infantalizing them, and still hesitate so often in dire situations because the Heir impulse is seen as a false mask. Whatever identity issues a Scribe might be dealing with, they are either vague or firm, not firmly vague as Heirs work out only the next step. Heirs are whatever the situation needs them to be, whoever their friends see them as, and breaking away from that into Mage isolation is not telegraphed, advertised, or negotiable. Scribes are, almost immutably, themselves, and trying to be there for everyone is very take-it-or-leave-it; even the most well-intentioned attempts of diplomacy veer into absolutes and assumptions, where the closest thing to withdrawl comes from "I'm still totally right but if it makes you feel better I'll move on". We already covered alot in the "Heirs and Lords" discrepency, and the bulk of it still applies here.

It's popular culture that frames Heir personalities as "default good guy hero leader". Nothing definitive, just culture of yesteryear. Don't hold yourself to those standards, if they even ever were.

SERVANTS: Scribes can find themselves swimming in self-deprication and awkward appeals, Derse ones especially so. There's a "stop and start" confidence very similar to Page habits, but it should be obvious this is just the Lord impulse at play; Scribes are a better comparison to Pages due to their innately passive nature creating a greater schism inside themselves. Of course, while less obviously selfish or boastful, there's still a distinct carelessness and difficulty integrating ideas; Pages will spend a lifetime combining their damage-control with theatrical ego, and will never feel right if they try either on its own. Scribes tend to go one or the other, and Pagey-ness still contains their high-energy, temper, and habit of dominating the

conversation by talking too much. This isn't to say that any of their self-hatred isn't genuine, that they're lesser as people, or that this state is as far as they *can* go at synthisizing their two impulses...but Page, Scribe, or anything else, loudly bemoaning yourself for being such a burden only makes you more of a burden. They are classes with different routes of self-improvement at the end of the day, and that's the important takeaway.

Don't come sniffing around my neck of the woods because "most powerful class" sounds pretty - especially if you define power as "nobody gets to tell me what to do". Newsflash, I define my strengths by diplomacy, discipline, and positively influencing people around me, and it's holding me up more than holding me back. That's a Page's idea of power, and we already know what a Lord's is. As is usually the case with inversion, you're already sitting on your solutions.

On to Knights. This actually is a fairly apt comparison, though still based on a misunderstanding. Knights and Scribes both have a (roughly) static view of what they offer to people, and the stress of keeping that up creates hard (and often rude) snaps to their inverse. It's important to state that just because these are two different classes is not to devalue the stress and strain either places on the individual - however, still two very different classes. Knights are only a notch up past Seers after all, and what they condone and accept in others is still alot; the ability to snap into Thief traits and reject abuse is still from someone who often *encourages* at least a little abuse to feed their martyring instincts, and feels natural (if not content) handling a large workload. Even at their best, a Scribe's aspect is still not really a motivating, physical thing; while it's usually the biggest hot-button sore spot, most Scribes are awful at physical work. This overpromising lethargy makes Scribes only protectors in their preferred approach of "I believe in you, you're perfect, end of story", and most of their "indignant rebellion" is from people asking for something with more substance. Another tell is how they latch on to people, since Knights have a general code of conduct that even holds to complete strangers. While they do pick favourites from time to time, Scribes default to it, orbiting particular people with fascination and devotion. If they do snap and burn that bridge, it won't be *every* bridge like Knights do with a more community-focused lense. Besides, as we've discussed, Scribes can just as readily preach their aspect without deferring to anyone in the room, which is far more of an alien concept for Knights.

Scribes write, Knights fight. You wanna do good, I am trying my damndest to deify the good you already wanted to do. If I sound defensive, I am. Being thorough in my arguments has gotten me this far. Like I said, I'm still not too optimistic about reaching a Scribe with this. Just, fingers crossed, visceral and accurate, like I have before.

OUTLAWS: For the same reasons we've discussed in Knights, Scribes being confused as Thieves can make a bit of sense. However, this "indignant rebellion" is against the razor-specific Scribe obligations

and conniptions, meaning we are *not* looking at a Thief - we are looking at an inverted Lord, free of its few shackles. Boasting about their achivements, intelligence, and influence, Scribes put themselves at the peak of “pleased with themselves”, all while considering themselves deserving of a vacation compared to a Thief *or* True Lord’s volition. There are still some altruistic gestures, as Scribes haven’t stopped being a centrally passive class, but it could still take awhile for them to shift to one of the other listed states, if ever. Ultimately, we’ve already done a good job explaining what Thieves are - again, they’re an underdog by design, and can’t “stick” a sense of superiority for longer than momentary arguments, competitions, or jokes. Their self-hatred is too engrained, and their resignations are precisely when the Knight-side is most active. Anything else to say would just be redundant at this point.

There are alot of Prospit Scribes out there, but the reason I held off on examples is that pointing to Lumpy Space Princess or Gina Linetti is informative but contextual.

Rogues, however, are a much finer line to draw. With only two notches off, Scribes at their most honest self truly do share a great deal of instincts with Rogues; offer alternatives to friends, struggle with central certainties, pull back when stretched too far. Being far more capable of sustaining serious heart-to-hearts, you’d almost forget Bards lie inbetween them - however, two notches of intensity means a world of difference. Rogues do not have the same fierce temper, and while that means they aren’t as knife-twisting when wronged, they also never go *as* close as a Scribe in complete devotion either. While both can have uncertainties to their aspect, Scribes are too fond of absolutes, where retreats only further the idea they were right in the first place, or pushing forward stampedes past the critical errors in their judgement. Rogues have more middle ground to pivot and brainstorm, never entirely trusting another and never entirely trusting themselves; they are at their boldest in brief moments, where both seem right and there’s something heroic to be performed. While this does make Rogues the more reliable class at conflict resolution, it’s not even something they want to do all the time; Scribes can much more clearly define the boundries of where they’re comfortable, and better push out those they want no time with. Surely, there’s room to learn from each other as they grow, even though they’re very different starting points.

Several drafts ago, the Rogue section was an absolute mess. This is why. This, right here, is why. In all fairness, I was pretty close.

FAE: Scribes are a passive class, but whether primary or not, sitting on a Lord impulse at all can let them go toe to toe with a Maid’s forward energy and personal faith. While this can create similar casual conversations and jabs, Scribes are a passive class, and that

comes with caveats. Being able to reach people intellectually or emotionally is still a fixation, and charging forward to do things themselves is contextual; even if a Scribe remedies their trademark languishing, there's still no need to overwork themselves past reasonable limits. Maids are inseperable from their gleeful, masochistic overheat, and while they can also be stressed out from trying to meet others demands (real or imagined), it's not something they even need to make that big of a deal over.

Alot of these comparisons are more theory than anything, since I'm still quite certain on certain clases being AMAB or AFAB locked, and exceptions at this point would be so rare as to only prove the point. Still...such varying depictions of what a "strong woman" is supposed to look like. How poisonous our culture is, to limit all the options; it's not like Pages, Bards, or Mages fit "correct" depictions of masculinity. Hell, there's some AMAB Seers out there...

Sylphs can come close depending on the Scribe, but even without drifting to one of the previously described masks/states, they still won't match. The confusions arise from the similar high-energy tension and inevitable snaps, where helping everyone turns sour if there's too much criticism. However, much like with Knights, a Sylphs energy does tend to lead to more dedicated chores and favours - and, rather unique to them, *continuing* that work even when personal difficulties arise. Sylphs may have bite (probably too much), but it takes much longer for them to actually forfeit a job, and even longer to break a friendship; being passive aggressive is enough, where those gestures from a Scribe still reflect someone bottling up hellfire for a direct confrontation. Sylphs don't give up on people or their aspect - even if they should, at least contextually, rather than at their absolute limits. Again, this isn't always something to envy.

ROYALS: At first glance, confusing (certain) Scribes with Princes makes alot of sense; cynical, dry, authoritive, easily resigned, trying to win arguments with "look how much I don't care". The thing is, like their closer relation to Bards, Scribes have a destructive impulse that doesn't put themselves in their own sightlines, and the extra tier of intensity means Scribes can actually outperform Princes in "I don't believe in fairies" grumpy misery. Of all things. Prospits are more prone to this, while freely embracing whimsy if it comes their way without worrying about a consistant reputation. Again, both their aspects do actually have value that won't go away, but addressing that is done very differently.

See, if you're going to put the Black Queen/Snowman somewhere, this would be about right.

Like with Priests and Princes, Bards provide the most interesting comparisons of similar instincts with only a few tweaks. It is in embracing the wildcard reputation of mirthful ambiguity that Bards find a stable place to judge others and work on their own projects;

true, they do have their nuclear moments where they feel spurned to take matters *very* seriously, but these are few and far between. Scribes can perform the same absolute confrontations and claims multiple times a day, which is probably why it's rather uncommon to see an actual Faux-Bard at work. Prospit Scribes seem to enjoy screwing people over for a cheap laugh or playing themselves off from time to time, but it's Dersites who often go furthest into mimicking the routine and reputation; zany and irreverant, constantly rambling with their ideas and doubts, trying to talk over their own insecurities, hoping the effort endears without really feeling "in control" of their instincts. If you have to tell the difference, remember how Bards meander and debate around their ideas, where even the nuclear switch is usually struggling to make people "get it"; Scribes know that if they get riled up enough (which is much easier to happen), there's rarely room to talk, and that can make their humor even more of a desperate effort to avoid that. There's a tragedy to it all, and inverting to realize the potential of the Maid and Lord sides only fixes so much - and there are certainly still dangers in letting a Lord off the leash.

MASTERS: We've already discussed many times how the dynamic with the Lord side defines Scribes, and how that self-assurance always boosts their stubborn arguments for any class they pick. While we'll discuss more during inversion, we are discussing here how Scribes actually resemble Lords...which is usually not at their best. Faux-Thief Scribes show self-interest with a nominal moderation to the world outside and those responsibilities; pushing past *that* is something really ugly. Inverted aspects often have more ugliness and contempt associated with them, and take awhile to recontextualize and redeem; Scribes who go full Lord usually aren't doing so out of goodwill, and that makes them capable of the most white-hot fury a human being can have. "Authority" isn't the right word, it's just brutality; a scale that starts at irritation and ends at throwing chairs at someone in a public space, screaming bloody murder. Lords are capable of alot of the same ugly, but even they veer to an attempt at justifications - it's only Scribes who can throw that entirely to the wind. Of course there's healthier Lords and Scribes out there, but we're not talking synthesis yet, only what happens when you bet all your chips on the little voice that says "I'm right, I'm a winner, I deserve everything" while the other does nothing but fuel that flagrant egomania.

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Yes. You can put your hand down. Karens are Scribes. I sincerely believe that not all
Scribes are Karens, but Karens are Scribes. Surely, that does a *dent* to the macho
bullshit Lords get associated with just as well?
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Confusing Scribes are Muses is highly contextual, to the point we may as well not bother. They are rivals as Tier 4 passive classes, seeking to unite the world with *very* different methods. It's Prospits who can

resemble that graceful calm to the point you might not be sure for a moment, but the patience and the prose won't match; Muses are stress balls, and seem to not recognize themselves if they don't. Even their fiercest moments and most actualized Priest retributions tend to fizzle and default back to apologies and towing the line, better fitting to the rhythms we discussed with Sylphs - which should make sense, obviously, they're only one notch off. Scribes are alot of things, but Muses tend to be only one, and they certainly prefer it that way.

We can change the name "Master" class if you really want. If it'll stop the envy I keep hearing about and seeing, maybe we ought to.

AUTHORS: Now that we've established what Priests are, it's worth actually comparing them to Scribes side by side. As paired classes, they share a similar approach; pinnacles of adaptation both, their primary aspect can be attached or interpreted in a manner so scattershot it almost (but *just never quite*) loses its identity entirely; their projects, no matter how blunt or creative they are intended to be, have rough stitching between the juxtaposed sources they take as inspiration. This pragmatism is paradoxically deified of course, where its easy to conflate their personal needs with cosmic order, just like the Master classes they invert with. Callousness still permeates their worldview, making them quick to write off strangers and uncomfortably sincere in how they'd like to punish those that have wronged them (or, you know, people with opposing politics). There's a beauty in their individuality that no one can match, but if they keep measuring themselves to others, they'll never see it - just spite, vapidity, and sneers. If you need to tell the difference, remember that no matter how much you annoy a Priest, their passive aggressive jabs still have a Muse's patience before anything truly explosive; Scribes are prickly, and they'll either confront or withdraw much, much faster. After all, their most reactive part is where other people fit into their lives, and that isn't enough on its own...

And, you know, AMAB and AFAB, as far as I can tell. Bluh.

INVERSION (PAYOFF): I really saved the toughest one for last...

LORDS AND SCRIBES don't need to be told they're not evil people - or really much of anything. They'd much prefer to talk to you about how they work, how the world works, and all number of things inbetween; if you chip in, they're usually expecting you to fit their script. Still, it is this confidence in their words that oversteps without subtelty, impulsively sticking to explanations that never quite match the other iterations of either class, or even the explanations they themselves give both past and future. It's more obvious from the outside which whims, irritations, passions and particular friendships

drive them, and more obvious in contrast how either class truly functions. We've gone over alot of states Scribes can take, and we've spoken in great detail on the small variances Lords play with, but narrowing one specific healthy conclusion isn't in the cards; no one has more faith in themselves than these two, and their problems and solutions will be defined by themselves first and foremost...at least, for them. If they want to spread those ideas to others, they have to put more work into it - and they clearly, on some level, truly want to.

A personal aspect **commanded**, and the passive aspect **conquered**; it is easy to forget that both are equal intensity, capable of balancing each other, even in calmer cases. Maids and Bards are such a sharp disparity of "aggressively doing everything" and "aggressively doing nothing" that their connection is still difficult to proccess, highlighting the dangers of going down one road entirely. Pages and Rogues seem the only ones lucid, but trying to find a balance still takes a lifetime when it's easier to retreat to the sidelines. Mages and Heirs are both the most reliable at what they do, but neither seems to immediately recognize why: balance. Intensity is a fickle bitch, and a Mage's unflinching force of will is a power far fiercer than so much of a Lord's bravado - after all, they sure as shit don't need to prove it, they already **know**. Just as well, Heirs have the incredible influence they do by virtue of not actually *wanting* to **change** that much in the first place. Lords have such a bloated sense of self-importance that trying to build a narrative of why the world either does or should revolve around oneself is a doomed effort, while a Scribe's narrow patience hamstrings their efforts to be the beacon they *legitimately want to be*. Somewhere, past all the manipulations, there's a genuine spark to Lords when they try to take people under their wing and give them the world. Somewhere, past the blowups and rudeness, Scribes are sitting on the definitive answer to who they are and where they belong in the world, just like they always wanted. Like with Priests and Muses, it's not about changing the world - it's just about knowing yourself, and giving to others as much as you're willing to give.

Scribes have alot of answers and paths of how they want to improve, who they want to be, and what they want to do. In a way, Lords do too, but the language rarely changes what actually goes on: they grow up. Matured Lords settle down, self-aware enough to acknowledge who they actually want to be, and not worry about shaking society; they always start out reminding people how little they care about things outside their interest, and now that evolves from boasting into quiet peace of mind. Their attachments are sparse - either in number, or duration - but there's wisdom in the attitudes they encourage, fearlessness in the severity of their sacrifices, and genuine vulnerability that does so much good now that it's not hidden. It is the

independent soul-of-the-poet they always wanted to be, where what used to define it as dangerous now only make it an aquired taste. For Scribes, all of this is on the table, like with any inversion; Lords learn to cherish that trust and approval from others, but Scribes seeking it exclusively are leaving their inner strength untapped. The hatred, the attention-seeking, the delusional defiance of basic facts, all (as I define it) a misfire - it's peace of mind, unyielding and unshaken, right there if they want it. The more we accept and find contentment with, the easier it is to work through our differences with people, process misfortune, or admit fault and fallibility. It's not about being everything to everyone, or angrily lashing out at those who don't take what you're selling, it's just...well, whatever you want it to be. The world does not have to represent us, reflect us - we are our own worlds, and these two demonstrate that best before they even know it.

I mentioned Silverhand earlier. Cyberpunk's Johnny-focused ending is true to life, cliches notwithstanding (or, perhaps, part of the deal). I do have a Lord in my life, and I'm actually really happy he is. I do trust him. I'm grateful he talks to me about what's going on with him, and even gave me a chance with all this. Even if he won't always be around, it means something for them to have your back. Course I know that. I always did. I just criticize Lords so much because I know they work better when they believe what they're saying - so I can believe it too. Like every aspect, like every part of life, believing it makes it true, in a sense. Something to hold to. I hope this means something too. I hope, if you are a Lord or Scribe, you can hold to it too.

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[later]

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CONCLUSION

(MAYBE THE REAL KING AND QUEEN CLASS WERE THE FRIENDS WE MADE ALONG THE WAY)

Congratulations! You have finished The Brochure, and are now briefed on the human personality archetypes that permeate the world around us! Of course, perhaps there are still doubts; are there exceptions? Can people be between two classes, or even a mismatched inversion, or no inversion at all? Maybe you're not satisfied with certain class descriptions, and feel there are variences or nuances not covered; maybe you're not sold on the last two classes, or any! For alot of these questions, the answer remains that you should go look outside; everyone you'll meet (or at least 99%) will be running one of these "scripts", and finding patterns of behavior past, present and future should help all this make sense. There's only so much these words can do after all, compared to the visceral sensation of our own experiences, our own judgements, and our own friends. I do, sincerely, believe everything I've written here to be true - I promise.

Sincerely, thank you for reading this far. I really do hope all this helps people, and that I can be forgiven for times I make a misstep, or give poor advice, or simply go too hard on an archetype (though I still

will defend the bulk of my Prince criticisms). I know not everyone will be familiar with the media references I've brought up, and I know there's skepticism invited by even having them (I am fully aware not all fictional characters count), it's just one more attempt to make this stuff *click*. Look, in the interest of my harshest critics, I already went through a few channels on getting myself looked over, and I'm not schizophenic; I might be a mess emotionally, but my ability to parse reality is not screwy. I get this is still from a dumb webcomic, and I can admit I've got zero psychological qualifications - I'm just some nerd aspie from Canada. I can't pretend I regret going forward with all this, no matter the arguments or permanently changing my reputation to "the classpect guy". Life goes on, but, hopefully I've helped make what Hussie saw more clear: people aren't that complicated. If you've got anything you want to add to the discussion, go for it, just so long as we're not debating that these exist in the first place - I think I've proved a point on that.

This is, effectively, the end; certainly of the general utility for the general public. I've got some lingering thoughts I want to include, but one's solely personal. The other is...well, let me tell you about a comic called "Homestuck".

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A WILD STAB IN THE DARK

(LIFE OF THE AUTHOR)

In the face of everything, all of it, Homestuck is often a comic about ships, theories, memes, and gray skin paint. While arguing about classpects is a pastime, it's weighed down by two factors: first, most people would rather pick classes that "sound" cooler rather than settle into a pre-existing role; secondly, that this is any more than fiction is a bit of a leap. I mean I get it. Hussie's got no doctorate here, so why would they even have anything to offer? And why obfuscated behind an obtuse webcomic?

Let's answer a question with a question: how do you think they got to all this? Look, I haven't had the chance to read all the director commentary in the Homestuck print books, but I haven't heard it circulated what Hussie's proccess was - in fact, their early life is pretty quiet online. I've made it very clear I already presume Hussie to be a Derse Priest, but I'm also well aware they ironically (if there's any meaning to the word left) called themself a "Waste of Space". They did, however, say that they spoke(texted?) similarly to Dave, and transitioned to Dirk's text later. Dave was always "the most natural" to them. But here's another thing: they *had* to have been exactly as analogous to Rose at the same time. I know this because I have.

Do I even have to describe a Seer of Light, or have we all been paying attention? To study and steady, in unbiased observation, the narratives and (presumed) destinies of others - their stories and conclusions, good and bad, and without being held to the same grip of those narratives. Important, sure; more important, Rose is characterized early on as someone who obsessively pychoanalyzes her friends, playing therapist and studying their behavior (a trait mostly downplayed as things go on, which rarely "fires" like a Checkov's ought to). Without ever meaning to, I found myself doing the same in an effort to find the truth in this mess of medieval cosplay; prodding others with questions, careful not to push too far or give too much away, playing it off with a derse touch of self deprication when things got awkward. Course, I'm still a Page, and a nervous wreck doing all of that...but how else would Hussie have *figured out* everything they did? Would the guy not have the reputation of mysterious psychoanalyzing, much to the chagrin of friends? Could half of those reading RESIST the curiosity of cracking their friends heads open, and studying the intricite repeating patterns of conviction and compulsion?

It goes further than that. To consider oneself a Knight isn't a terrible assessment for someone trying to encourage others with a blunt, direct and dry efficiency - an expectation it's what they need, even if no one asked. Hell, wouldn't even be that far to regard one's own "time-related needs" as something to sacrifice, too selfish to consider. Not neccesarily the same way as a Knight would...but close. I said earlier I believed Lord English to be an anaology of the worst characteristics; *if so*, is an Heir of Breath not alarmingly similar to an Heir of Void? Breath and Void move in similar ways, though forgiving and forgetting a problem have different applications and a stark contrast of nobility; moreso, the gaslighting of a truly dangerous Priest had a darker, more cautious edge...but Equius is the Derse one of the two, wasn't he? John was more honest. Maybe Andrew hoped they were, at least once.

And if all 3 of these states are viable, and it's obvious you aren't running any of the same "scripts" as your friends, then a Witch of Space's personal malleability of creative expression is RIGHT on the money, ain't it?

Now like I said, I can relate to Rose, and that is from the circumstances. There's reason to guess, maybe, hypothetically, the beta kids are a conglomerate of Hussie's childhood ennui - but the Alpha kids? REALLY look at the Classpect system, see the potential to "resolve" people of avoidable internal strife, and you wind up in a pretty similar place. Stand for yourself, **exploit fantasy and delusion available to you optimally**. Everyone around you depressed? **Fight the world until it resembles the stability you want**, even if you can barely contain it under the guise of negotiation. They get caught up with the rest of their lives, who they think they are and how the world works? **Tell them to forget. Tell them to let go.** Not an Heir's touch...something more to risk, something more heartfelt and vulnerable, even if it's more honest that the problem hasn't gone away - you're just saying **it doesn't matter, and it doesn't have to a part of your story**. They get huffy? Jesus, why? You just offered them hope, life, and eased the journey there. Yeah, maybe they've got **stubborn gut feelings about who they are...**but isn't that enough to make one irritated, even if you try to pretend you're just nobly sacrificing for them? Really, they're gonna get passionate and say being misreable is just "who they are"? You know better. You know them better than they know themselves, and you've got the paperwork to prove it, the ungrateful idiots. Rip that band aid off - **destroy it**.

It's the perfect recipe for transforming your friend group into an unstoppable gnostic-themed unit of self-actualization and purpose - until you actually cook the recipe. It turns out, if you try to condense all these ideas of perfection and spiritual decadence into a concentrated meat-and-candy package, then force feed that to someone, the results might scare you.

Maybe real people work differently than that.

I've had to learn that. And now I find myself wondering, precariously, if Hussie went through these exact same paces. I followed their notes, tried to draw a better map, and wind up walking through their exact footsteps...but did they turn around here?

The Cherubs are, beyond a shadow of a doubt in my mind, Hussie himself. A religious homage, analogies for the split fanbase, a villain ex machina, maybe that too - but I'll put money on it being Andrew first and foremost. Priests are the direct inverse of a genuine Muse, and what better anology for inversion could there POSSIBLY be? And does that not raise a hundred fiery questions on Calmasis, the enigmatic pseudo-union of the two, drawn almost identical to Hussie's own comic insert - irrelevant to the main comic beyond Hussie's comic self dressing as them? Of course, while Priests do emulate Lords if they do nothing but ramp themselves up, it's imperfect to the real thing - they are dispassionate, dishonest, and disguised. I already covered that. Maybe now it makes more sense: 8 human faces, all with struggles and doubts, all roles used up a twisted theatre show - both webcomic, and perhaps a real human life. Behind it all, a chimeric demon of 4 evils: a ruthless monster, a souless robot, a manipulative pervert, and an insane clown who thinks he's a king.

But what to make of it then? Caliborn takes over a body of two, but the other side still wins in the end? The kids...still, make it, and make their own world, are the dreambubbles still analogous to fanworks? Homestuck is just Hussie(x4) vs Hussie + Hussie(x4) + Hussie(x4)? Well, to be fair, it would explain why he wanted people to name the characters themselves. Hell, how much is English a metaphor for Priests and how much Hussie himself, if Gamzee is a component? The guy IS a Capricorn, and my own anecdotes of people I know and my own father only go so far. What about all the characters dating each other and going through their own business? What is the natural progression of these

impulses made into self-sustaining characters with arcs in the purpose of entertaining fiction, and what is autobiographical confessions?

I have no answers to where the lines are, I'm afraid. I can say with relative certainty (and I suppose it's your call how much you believe me, which is fair) that Hussie's self-insert antics are the tip of a truly imposing iceburg of mindful self indulgance, but I cannot tell you his full intention. At the same time, we're not idiots here - we can establish a few things. That he finished this. That past the jokes, it meant something to him. That he did, at least once, care about using this system to help people; that might require some faith, but I truly don't see how he could've written *that story* with the Alpha Kids, and not been in the position I (and perhaps someday, you) are in. The direct approach has limits - the Muse won. He gave everyone the toolset, but skipped half the labels and burned the instructions...now I have the audacity to think that cowardice, and publicly admit it's wisdom I only *hope* is misplaced.

They weren't a licensed professional, sure, but that only explains the format - not the point. Maybe they thought spelling it out was insustainable, and danced around it to pique curiosity without lecturing? Maybe they just wanted to tell their story, broken dreams and all? As an old friend of mine used to say, "a little of column A, a little of column B."

So here's a thought: how much SHOULD we care what Hussie says?

https://blog.giovanh.com/blog/2020/10/03/the-hiveswap-fiasco/
https://blog.giovanh.com/blog/2021/01/14/hussie-exploited-the-odd-gentlemen-backers/
https://archive.vn/CgeSz

After all of this, I have to admit I'm currently rather burned out of Homestuck. Not from it's bad takes (even if I should) but just feeling skeeved out at the man's behavior and terrible management. I mean it really is the sum of our inevitable parasocial relationships in this modern world to feel an attachment to these figures without knowing them; still, even your real friends can dissapoint, so maybe we're all shit as a species. I accept the folly. Accept my brain is malleable and fallible. It's just dissapointing to watch someone veer into duplicitous autocracy after writing a story about knowing better. Is this a relapse, or was his takeaway more a comprimise than I hoped? All I know is, the more I dig in to quotes and such, the more I recognize. I hope, maybe, you will too - from people you know, people I've spoken of, and maybe people you are.

At the end of the day, despite *everything*, Homestuck is a pretty great webcomic. Hussie, despite the kind of fickle attention span that's doomed so many of that archetype trying to write a grand epic, made something worth the investment while finding fame and fortune. Maybe that changed them. Maybe they never changed. Regardless of intent, people have and always will take what they like about Homestuck, as a smorgasbord of ideas and concepts that invites collaboration and wonderment, a tribute to the endless potential of the human soul. If the bigshot themself comes out of their hole and gives a tell-all, would it matter? Hell, I wouldn't even believe most of it at this point. They talk alot about the comic being out of their hands, but I think it is even more than they know.

Hussie's a genius. They're also, currently, a shitty businessman prone to betrayal and spiteful cruelty, in securing their power and stepping on anyone close to competition, all while refusing to acknowledge the hard work of the people involved in their empire. They might settle out to something more agreeable, they might not. I think it does me good to not worry too much about them, beyond a sincere thank you for the work they did and the positive impact it had on my life. Hopefully, to those reading this, and certainly those in a similar position of dissatisfaction with the fandom, one can find solace in salvaging and surviving. It's not perfect. Nothing ever is, because nothing can be perfect to everyone. So take what you can from Homestuck in the weaving of your own story, trash the rest, and don't be surprised that someone else focused on something else - even if they're still *wrong* about classpects.

SOME WORDS IN CLOSING

(WE'LL MEET AGAIN, DON'T KNOW WHERE, DON'T KNOW WHEN)

I've rewritten this section many, many times. I've had ideas on what I wanted the closing statement to be before I even finished writing all the classes - hell, before I discovered (rediscovered?) the bonus two. I already released an earlier version on Reddit in a haze, and it's still nagging at me that it wasn't good enough. I've redone

everything, and I wonder how much I'll still tinker with, and how much I'll come back to these words as well. Maybe I'll trash it all again - I mean you could fill a book just with all the different epilogues I've written here.

Alot of it was about my dad. It's hard for it not to be. Priest of Void, always giving you the reason you'd believe for the whim he wanted. I'm what he asked for - just, not what he wanted. I'm wimpy, I'm indecisive, but...there's just limits on how much one can justify reckless destruction, how much good you can make of it. He asked for rules. He always justified his hypocrisies with this illusion of structure, invented a method to the madness that kept changing. I listened, and I clearly heard something right - Page of Time, Rogue of Space, believe in violence and fight beliefs. I'm the sum of his excuses, as broken as his explanations, the mimicry of his posturing made genuine. Hell, my brother's still an Heir of Breath, what does that say?

I'm trying to define myself, and I've ended up with the words of someone who probably isn't that different. How much of these ideas do I own? How much do I want to own? I get so swept up in ideas of others, but I hate being pulled in so many directions at once when I can't find equilibrium - there's a truth in there, something pure, something Priests don't have. Even then, I've had my soul up for sale too often, and given myself over to people I shouldn't, trying to be everything *they* wanted. If I'm left to my own devices, my thoughts don't make sense even to me, and I don't even feel like I exist. There's just some middle ground there, where everything's bouncing around but I can take stock of what I'm trying to put together.

It's why the poetry is here. It's the only time I've ever written poetry. I've blanked, every other time, and freaked out. I can academically do a rhyming scheme, but it's cold and mathematical - it's not me. I recognize what's not me because there is a me, and most of that's best expressed in smashy violence poetry. I need that. It, and the whole style of the brochure. The scattershot, the disembodiment, the depersonalization. That's me. I really do hope this helps people, but I need this for me too.

Look, Classpects aren't all we are - they're important, sure, but like mental disorders and physical disabilities, they're just things we live with. I think it makes more sense to romanticize them, because they're so often our mechanism *to* romance, you know? But hesitantly, not so much we don't understand the burden. Just please understand, I meant everything I said. When we understand they're impulses, we can make them more; the more we understand they're subjective, the better we can "sell" other people on them.

Isn't that all life is? Negotiation? Or is that projection on my part? Am I wrong? We're surrounded by thinkpieces, advertisements, propoganda, literature, tombstones, all fighting each other on "What it's all about". It's a fight because you can win if someone agrees with you - apparently. If those are the terms, why are we fighting? If we can believe anything we want, why believe anything at all? Nihilism is its own metanarrative, as much as anything. A conclusion implies a problem, implies a proccess, implies *alot*. Why the hell do we keep overhyping some "search for meaning"? What if there was an objective truth to life? Call it God, call it whatever - what if it *didn't* work for you? What if it made you uncomfortable, what if you weren't a part of it? Who the fuck decides anything? For the liars selling anything to get ahead, what other narrative are they buying where it's worth it? Money and power? Who the fuck are you trying to impress?

We all have opinions, and reailty is the only dream we all share without a choice. It's not everything, but it is the staging ground. It's where we meet people, where we share the new, where we argue around the inarguable. Some people act like all that matters is materialism, money, sex, and some people act like all that matters is sticking your head in the clouds - isn't there such a thing as balance? Can't we just make use of what we have instead of trying to decide what's "evil"? The opinions I've laced this document with are "be excellent to each other", "treat others the way you want to be treated", and "treat yourself the way you treat your friends". I am willing to stand by those, certainly to the friends I care about. I ain't going to take over the world with it, and I don't plan to. It is just not worth the hassle, and it doesn't solve anything.

Look, just stop worrying so much, okay? Don't fall apart because someone doesn't agree with you, and don't fall apart yourself just because you might be wrong - not even a prideful thing, you could even be wrong about how bad you think you are. Don't run from the ugly. Don't run from pain, and suffering, and "uncomfortable" thoughts. We learn, we brace for it, we make a choice what we will or won't fight through, and who we'll fight for or against. There is always a choice, and we don't need some pretty idea of "objectivity" to back us up, when all it does is distract us from our responsability. We choose what we believe, and without some "universal good", we're stuck trying to justify

ourselves to the people we want to justify it to. We are our own Gods. We can be good ones, and it's up to you to decide what that is. Certainly, at least, I can try and push you to not run from the happiness you're scared to accept, or screw people over in a way you'll feel guilty about later. That if we cannot accept the things we can't change, that someone else might have the tools to do so; that if we don't accept the way things are, that we could ever notice what we can overpower.

At the risk of projecting, we're all mimics. We all take ideas from other people, and our classpects are shared at our discretion. We hold onto wisdom from other mouths, and you can still feel the heat from when it burned in their hearts. Same with stories, same with old books, same with this dumb document. We don't need them *with* us to be a *part* of us, and that is a fact.

Face tomorrow unafraid.